THE WORKS

OF

MRS ELIZABETH ROWE:

INCLUDING

ORIGINAL POEMS AND TRANSLATIONS

BY MR THOMAS ROWE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

THE

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OF

MRS ELIZABETH ROWE:

IN

FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME SECOND.

CONTAINING

LETTERS MORAL & ENTERTAINING PART III. DEVOUT EXERCISES OF THE HEART, IN MEDITATION, IN SOLILOQUY, PRAYER, PRAISE, &c. POEMS & TRANSLATIONS BY MR THOMAS ROWE.

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LETTERS

MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.

PART III.

LETTER I.

To Lady SOPHIA; *The sequel of the story of* ROSALINDA.

You will find me, dear Lady Sophia, in a more gay disposition than when I writ my last letter. Perhaps the fair season has some influence on my temper; the spring is now in its prime, and blooming Nature appears in all her various pride; the fields and groves resound with artless harmony; the linnet and warbling lark invite me often to rise with the fragrant morning; nor am I unwilling to obey the gentle summons, though 'till I came here I had never beheld the rising sun; the sight was as great a novelty to me as a blazing star would have been; the opening dawn was one of the *arcana* of Nature into which my curiosity had never pried. Indeed, I had read many poetical descriptions of the rosy-fingered Morning unbarring the gates of Light, and decked in golden vestments, beginning her progress over the Eastern hills; but I left Aurora to her rural hours, without the least

inclination to trace her footsteps in the pearly dew. She was no precedent for me; I was too polite to open my eyes at such ungenteel seasons; the sun shone in vain, its beams were useless 'till the modish world appeared.

But I have now conquered these refinements, and can bear the aukward custom of rising with the fresh morning, and going to bed when the dusky evening closes, or I might keep myself awake while every other intelligent Being on this part of the globe sleeps; when human affairs cease, and the calm creation seems lulled in a peaceful slumber, except Elves and Fairies. I cannot precisely determine what hours they keep; but here is a nurse in the family, who is intimately acquainted, as she says, with these sprightly phantoms; she has been admitted to their moon-light revels, and has led me to many a circle distinguished with perpetual verdure, where they use to dance their light fantastic rounds. Bridget and Joyce, our two dairymaids, add their testimony to the nurse's, and relate their own visionary experience. I am no great infidel; sometimes I believe, and always wish the pretty stories they tell me were true; but I dare not object against any of those relations for fear of being thought a Heathen by the whole village.

My circumstances are now very easy, my mistress is fully persuaded my education has been su-

perior to my present station, and treats me more like a sister than a servant. I am under no restraints but those of gratitude and justice, which will not suffer me to be idle where I know myself to be dependent.

For a damsel of quality I can work well enough with my needle; and as this is all my mistress will suffer me to do, I carry my work to some verdant retreat, of which here are great variety in a large garden and wide range of orchard joining to the house. I am delighted with old fashioned bowers covered with woodbine and sweetbrier, and can sit as much at my ease on a bank of camomile shaded with laurel as ever I did in a painted alcove. Maple-trees and box, with bushes of roses, are placed about in a very agreeable disorder; the whole scene appears gay, but wild above rule or art:

——While Nature here
Wantons as in her prime, and plays at will
Her virgin fancies—— *Milton.*

The orchard joining to it is spacious and fair as the Hesperian inclosures; violets, primroses, and crocus embroider the level green on which you tread; the trees are set in rows, their branches mingle above, and are now in their gaudy blossoms; the birds sit careless on the flowery sprays, and from their little throats pour out a stream of harmony, while fragrant gales refresh the sense, and with

their aromatic breath diffuse gladness to the soul.

Just at the bounds of this luxuriant retreat stands an ancient oak; the extended boughs are a shelter from the mid-day sun, which perhaps your Ladyship would endure rather than screen your beauty in such a rustic shade. Elysian groves and myrtle bowers are better suited to the delicacy of your imagination; but I am now reconciled to Nature in its greatest negligence, and, seated in this venerable recess, find virtue and liberty the principal springs of human happiness. My hours are here at my own disposal, nor am I obliged to devote them to ceremony or vain amusements I find myself under no necessity to court the impertinent, or flatter the ambitious, nor to do a thousand unreasonable things, for fear of being singular and out of the mode.

The only intimacy I have contracted is with a daughter of the minister of this parish; they call her Sally; her conversation is perfectly innocent and agreeable, and has something in it charming beyond all the specious rules and studied elegance of the *beau monde*; she has spent her leisure in reading, and has certainly perused all the good books in her father's study, having never opened a page on any subject, but religion, except *Argalus* and *Parthenia*. Her preciseness is all natural and unaffected: her locks, her words, her whole behaviour, has an air of sanctity; one can hardly believe

her an inhabitant of this world, but rather a native of some more refined and holy region; the sweetness of her countenance, with the surprising beauty of her whole person, would confirm this thought, if some evidence of morality did not appear in her declining health. She believes herself in a consumption, and talks of dying as calmly as most people talk of going to sleep.

However, this indifference is not, perhaps, entirely the effect of piety; a tender passion seems to have some share in it. Her health began to decline from the time her lover died. He was the son of a neighbouring clergyman; their marriage was concluded by the consent of both their parents. There had been an innocent tenderness between them from their childhood, and just at the period set to crown their mutual passion, the youth was seised with a fever which ended his life, and left the gentle maid to mourn her disappointed joys.

Since that she has no attachment to this world; all her schemes of happiness are in a future state, on which her whole attention is fixed; and nothing can be more sparkling than her conversation on these subjects. As some people grow dull and morose in talking of religion, it brightens her countenance, gives a vivacity to her thoughts, and heavenly eloquence to her tongue. The beauty of the spangled firmament in a clear summer evening gives her an apparent pleasure. "In a little time," she

often says, " I shall have a nearer view of those " radiant wonders, and shall myself outshine their " glimmering lustre."

You would be glad, Lady Sophia, if I would leave Sally with the angels, and talk to you of Knights of the Garter, blue ribbands, embroidered coats, and other sublunary things. There is such a wide extreme betwixt these subjects and heavenly themes, that I cannot introduce your tender affair with any manner of decorum; the descent is too precipitant. But if I must talk of love, my own amour is somewhat more of the ethereal kind than your's, and the transition will not be so difficult.

Nor will it displease you to hear that my lover continues constant, with the addition of six thousand a-year to his estate: it was left him by one of the S———r family, who lately died without an heir.

My mistress has been a constant advocate for the lovely youth, believing his proposal a vast preferment for me; while my generous lover makes his addresses with greater warmth and assurance than when his estate was less, thinking it now in his power to offer me a reparation for whatever misfortune hath reduced me to a state so unequal to what (he is persuaded) my education has been.

I have not yet accepted his proposal, nor discovered my rank to him; but it is very probable I shall do both. What objection can I, or rather

what can you, make against it? His descent is every way illustrious, and has vastly the advantage of mine; nature has distinguished him with an air of grandeur beyond all the borrowed lustre of titles or equipage. There is an elegance in his behaviour superior to the rules of art or imitation; not Paris, when confessed Prince on the plains of Ida, appeared more graceful. He talks of love, not in the strains of dramatic frenzy, but with the sobriety of reason and virtue: Persuasion dwells on his tongue, while he describes the gentle passion, in accents calm as the midnight air. What the consequence will be I cannot yet determine. Dear Lady Sophia, adieu.

LETTER II.

To Lady SOPHIA.

MY romance is now finished, the drama is come to a conclusion; I have been married these four months, and, from the sober regular way of life I am now in, you must expect no more adventures.

I forgot in my last to inform you, that with the six thousand a-year there was a seat nobly furnished left to ——————what must I call him? not my husband, for fear the awkward domestic found should give you the spleen: and if I should give him the appellation of my gallant, my lover, or

the charming youth, you would think me run mad in romance: but I hope I may call him by his proper name, which is Lucius.

The seat, of which he is now the possessor, looks like the abode of Liberty and guiltless Delight; the situation has something in it so jovial and airy, that it gives an alacrity to the mind. It stands on a gentle rising, with a view of a spacious valley before it, through which a luxuriant river draws its shining train, and blesses the borders with immortal verdure; the wide campaign beyond opens a fair variety of hills, of groves, and fertile plains, which terminate in a distant prospect of the sea. You have this beautiful scene of Nature from every window in the front of the house.

The opposite side of the structure discloses a quite different view; as that seems the triumph of Nature, this appears the insult of Art; the gardens and groves are so exquisitely fine and regular, that I fancy myself in Fairyland; it looks all like the effect of enchantment, and beyond human contrivance.

The Loves and Graces figured in the painted alcoves persuade me I am got among the immortals, who seem to court me to their soft recesses; when through a long visto the smiling forms rise in just proportion before me, I converse with deities, and am charmed with the wonders of the poetical world.

I find leisure enough for these visionary delights, being discharged from family cares by my husband's grandmother, who is qualified to manage those affairs with great prudence and decency: It is a pleasure to me to submit to her advice in every punctilio, as I find it obliges Lucius, who treats her with the utmost deference and respect; nor fails to find some handsome excuse for any thing that has the appearance of obstinacy or caprice in her temper.

His merit in every occurrence secures my esteem; an air of justice and benignity shines through his whole conduct; his mind was in the same elevation when his fortune was at the lowest; nor has this unexpected turn had the least influence on the modesty and evenness of his disposion: his management in every thing is at once generous and discreet; he has devoted a thousand pounds a-year, out of the six thousand, to charitable uses; another thousand he secured to me for my peculiar expences; the rest to be spent in his household, the charge of which he has limited to his income, and pays his bills once a month with great exactness, that no honest tradesman may be injured by his delay. Whatever trespass is done by the carelessness of his servants, in the pursuit of their rural sports, he patiently hears the complaints of the sufferers, and restores their damage to the full.

His compassion is equal to his justice; never

has he been seen to turn away from a spectacle of pity; never has he shut his ears to the voice of Distress; never, by an insolent reproach, silenced the cries of Poverty, nor delayed his bounty to the necessitous.

Several honest clergymen, with large families and narrow incomes, have already experienced his generosity, and blessed their young benefactor. He has taken a son of a neighbouring minister into the family, who was bred at the University, and is a youth of great piety, and very good sense; he reads constantly to us morning and evening prayers, when not a servant in the house is suffered to be absent.

Lucius has a handsome collection of English and French authors; his father lived long enough to see him instructed in both these languages; so that his books, with the conversation of the young student, are the agreeable amusement of his leisure hours, which are not so many as he seems to wish, his rank and merit still engaging him in a new acquaintance, there being several gentlemen's seats scattered about in this pleasant campaign.

I find myself more free and disengaged, having no companion but Sally. In her conversation I forget I am below the stars, and mingle with immortal beings; her sentiments are all elevated and refined, the language of heaven flows from her lips in accents sweet as an angel's voice; she has a

surprising memory, and speaks the finest parts of Milton by heart: I fancy myself among the celestial minstrels when she repeats that description where

——Their golden harps they take,
Harps ever tun'd, that, glitt'ring by their side,
Like quivers hung, and, with preamble sweet
Of charming sympony, they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high.

Mr Pope's *Messiah* is another of her favourite poems; which she recites with such a graceful pronounciation, that it seems always new and surprising.

But while I am enjoying this agreeable society, I know it is a pleasure that is stealing from me, like some fair flower, whose bloom withers while I am regaling my sense with its fragrancy: the young saint is bidding adieu to mortal things, and preparing for her native skies. I brought her hither, to try if the change of air would mend her health; but I see no advantage she has by it: and finding her impatient to return, I have promised to carry her in my chaise to-morrow back to her father's house. I go the more willingly, that I may make a visit to the peaceful abode where I spent so many happy hours.

I know not if my mistress has yet recovered the confusion she was in at the discovery of my quality. As for Lucius, it seemed to be no secret to

him; he told me, there was something in my behaviour that convinced him I was not in my proper station; but by what misfortune I was sunk he could never make the least conjecture: my conduct, he thought, was too reserved to suffer him to suspect any thing to my disadvantage; and when he found my concealment was on a religious account, it gave him the highest satisfaction to find it in his power to place me in circumstances more agreeable and independent.

Two or three days after I was married I writ to my father with all the submission and tenderness that natural affection could dictate: I am informed he relents, and is pleased with an alliance to this noble family; but I have not yet had the honour of any letter or message from his Lordship. Oh, could I throw myself at his feet, and once more hear his paternal blessing, my happiness were complete!

The Pastoral I have inclosed was only writ as a solitary amusement; which makes me send it without any apology, or giving myself the airs of being an author: I hope it will not displease you that my shepherd happens to be a Christian, and that the pastoral scene lyes on the British plains, as long as I leave you to wander at your leisure in the vale of Tempe, or follow your fleecy charge on the fair Arcadian pastures. Adieu.

Yours, &c.

ROSALINDA.

A PASTORAL.

HENRY *and* LUCY.

Henry.

LUCY, while resting in this verdant shade,
By Pow'r Divine thus elegantly made,
Say, canst thou envy pomp and regal rooms,
Gay with the luxury of Persian looms?
Or painted roofs, whose beauty would entice
The thoughts through all the fabled joys of vice
Fabled, indeed! true joys it cannot boast,
Since pleasure flies when innocence is lost;
Remorse, despair, and ev'ry cruel guest,
Become the inmates of the guilty breast.

Lucy.

How spotless, Henry, is thy well-turn'd mind,
Averse to ill, to follow good inclin'd!
With thee conversing, ev'ry day I learn
New charms in sacred virtue to discern;
And emulous of thee, with joy pursue
That goodness I admire and love in you.

Henry.

Thou need'st not learn of me; in Nature's book
Thou may'st on thy Creator's wisdom look:
And as the planets run their constant race,
His glorious footsteps in their order trace.
He bids the sun in all its beauty rise,
To bless our soil, and gild the vaulted skies;
And, by the word of his Almighty pow'r,
Ordains the moon to cheer the midnight hour;
While sparkling stars in solemn order wait
Upon her silent course, to grace her state.

Lucy.

Nor in the skies alone his pow'r is seen;
We view it in the grove and flow'ry green;

To imitate whose charms all art is faint:
The rose's glowing blush what hand can paint?
Or equal the pale lily's snowy hue,
Or emulate the corn-flow'r's glossy blue?

Henry.

Sure, Lucy, we, like the first Pair, are bless'd,
While here, secure with innocence and rest,
Our happy hours on dowy pinions fly;
When thus assisted by Faith's stedfast eye,
Upon our Maker's works we humbly gaze,
And, for their goodness, render him the praise.
Thus, in the Patriarch's days, the Jewish swains,
Who fed their flocks on Mamre's fruitful plains,
Worship'd Jehovah in the woods and field,
And prais'd his name for all the fruit they yield;
Implor'd his mercy to direct their ways,
To guard their nights, and sanctify their days.
But, see! the ev'ning o'er the dewy lawn
Already has her sable curtain drawn;
Homeward we'll go, and, as we slowly walk,
Beguile the tedious way with farther talk.

LETTER III.

From the same: to Lady SOPHIA.

Madam,

THE day after I writ to you last, I carried Sally home; where I left her, not thinking, when we parted, that we were to meet no more in this world; but so it proved; she languished about three weeks, and then, without any struggle or convulsive pangs, gently resigned her breath.

With what impatience she attended the happy period the inclosed will inform you; she writ it a few days before she died, and gave it in charge to one of her friends, to deliver it to me.

To ROSALINDA.

Dear Lady Frances,

"MY sands are now running low; the springs of "life will soon cease; the dust is returning to its "native dust, and the immortal part to its great "Original; the happy day is dawning, which shall "never be shaded with succeeding night; some "glimmerings of celestial glory break through the "gloom, and scatter the horrors of death; I hear "from far the harps of heaven in soft prelidiums "to call me to the skies.

"I shall shortly mingle with the morning stars, "and converse with the first-born sons of Light; "I shall enter the blissful assembly, and be num-"bered among the glittering attendants of the "empyrean courts; the Supreme Excellence shall "unveil itself, and suffer me to gaze on uncreated "beauty; I shall feel the force, and breathe the "raptures of immortal love; the smiling moments, "crown'd with joy and ever-blooming life, must "now begin their everlasting round.

"The stormy ocean is past; the short fatigue "fulfilled; the peaceful haven is in view; I am "just setting my foot on the blissful coast; the "charming land of Love, the aromatic breezes al-

" ready meet me from the fragrant shore, and cheer
" me in the last faintings of Nature.

" Dear Lady Frances, adieu! 'Till now I never
" bid you a glad farewell, nor parted without re-
" luctance; but we shall meet in more serene cli-
" mates; we shall meet in the fullness of joy, in
" the elevation of glory. Mine, indeed, by the just
" degrees of recompence, will be a station far below
" your's; my probation has been only the passive
" exercise of content and patience; but such virtue
" as your's, which has triumphed on all the gay
" allurements of the world, shall meet a glorious
" distinction; the noble army of martyrs will re-
" ceive you to their number, grace you with the
" radiant circlet and victorious palm, and record
" your conquest in the annals of heaven.

" I speak this to animate your virtue, to encou-
" rage you in the race of glory. I am now past
" flattery, or dependence on the greatest of mor-
" tals; but I feel the most tender concern for your
" happiness, and shall carry the gentle impression
" to the regions of exalted friendship, the native
" dominions of Love, to which I am now going.
" Once more, my dear Rosalinda, adieu!"

This letter came to me with the sad tidings of her death; no language can describe my grief in its just emphasis. You will give me leave to weep; and sympathize with

Your's,

ROSALINDA.

LETTER IV.

To CARLOS.

As you was the confidant of my unjust design in visiting Philander at his country seat, you have reason to expect I should inform you of the success of that adventure.

I had a secret passion for Aspasia before her marriage with this noble youth, and flattered myself with some hopes of finding her prepossessed in my favour.

You know how exceeding cautious and discreet I have been in my pleasures, and with what dissimulation I have secured to myself the character of a man of honour and sobriety: by this advantage I found it easy to impose on my friend, whose goodness was real and unaffected, while his unblemished integrity left him unguarded to all my artifice.

But I found it impossible to elude my father by my specious virtues; his penetration saw through that disguise by which I had escaped the public censure; nor could any thing have been more detestable to his open temper than the affectation and hypocrisy of mine. After he had traced one of my most criminal intrigues, and found me unreclaimed by his tenderest admonitions, he resolved to disinherit me, and settle his estate on my younger brother, who is really possessed of all those good qua-

lities to which, with a vain ostentation, I have only pretended.

My brother, perceiving my father's disgust, and the intention he had to make him his heir, with an unequalled generosity, gave me intelligence of the threatened misfortune, desiring me to employ some friend to persuade my father from his severe proceeding.

This news came to me while I was detained a willing guest by Philander at his country-seat. I discovered the affair to him, who immediately offered to attempt a reconciliation. I gladly accepted the kind intention, nor knew any person so likely to succeed.

Philander proposed staying two or three days with my father, in order to insinuate himself the more successfully. In the mean time, I found but too easy access to the fair Aspasia; and, by an artifice that deserves the blackest infamy, prevailed with her to make a criminal appointment in a private garden belonging to the house.

This was the second day of her husband's absence; the happy hour (as I then thought it) arrived, when I was to attend my mistress in a sequestered arbour; but just as I was entering the walk that led to it, a footman came hastily after me with a letter from Philander, which brought me the welcome news of his success with my father. The vast satisfaction he expressed for having procured

this reconciliation, with the real concern for my welfare, which appeared in every line, raised a sense of honour in my soul. I read the letter again, and found my guilt aggravated by its bright reverse; and my falsehood was heightened by the warmth and fidelity with which the generous man had pursued my interest; my crime stood before me in its most infamous view, but how to extricate myself from this perplexity I was entirely at a loss.

To neglect an opportunity I had with such solicitude obtained; to disappoint a yielding beauty; to dare the effects of her contempt or resentment, by acting contrary to all the gallant maxims of the world, was doing the utmost violence to a disposition like mine. But then, to wrong my friend with an evidence of his fidelity in my hand, where every tender line would reproach such villany; Alexander and Scipio (I told myself) would condemn me; with many an heroic Pagan, who, in the height of youthful desires, had conquered the allurements of a guilty passion.

It was happy for me that some accident prevented Aspasia from following me so soon as she designed. I was so far from being impatient at her absence, that I blessed every moment's delay, and was contriving to avoid the interview just as I saw her entering the garden.

I had been unused to mental devotion; and yet,

in this dangerous moment, on which my perdition seemed to hang, I sent a secret prayer to Heaven for assistance.

Instead of flying to the charmer's embraces with the gaiety of a lover, I went forward with a slow reluctant pace 'till we met, and then gave her my friend's letter. As soon as she had read it, she told me, "I might be assured it spoke the language of "his soul; and it is (added she) to the advantage-"ous light in which he has set your character; it "is entirely to that you are obliged for the favour-"able opinion I have of you."

"Is it, indeed, to this generous man," I replied, "that I am indebted for the share I have in your "esteem? And can I return such goodness with "the vilest ingratitude!"—Here I paused, still keeping a respectful distance.

Aspasia, with her eyes fixed on the ground, stood in a silent confusion: but, in this mute interval, imagine, if you can, what must be the conflict of my soul! I had spoke my last; an eternal silence must certainly have ensued, if the gentle Aspasia, perceiving my distress, had not put me out of pain for an apology.

"I see," said she, "the disorder you are in: "this retreat of honour ought to have been mine; "I sincerely wish it had been so: however, you "have led me the way, and I owe my recovery to "your prudence."

"It was my importunity, Madam," replied I, "that drew you into this criminal engagement; "for which I am going to inflict on myself the "severe penalty of seeing you no more."

"This was what I was just resolving," answered the fair penitent, "but you have gone before "me in every step of virtue; we must indeed meet "no more: some disorder I feel gives me a pre-"tence to retire immediately to my chamber; and "you may leave this place early in the morning, "with a proper excuse for not seeing me."

She was seated under a shade of jessamin, and appeared charming as the Queen of Love. My philosophy began to stagger, when she hastily rose, and left me in an agony of mind which no words can express.

However, I had so much command of myself as not to follow her; my Reason exerted all its powers; the Divinity within spoke with a commanding force, and bid the wild tempestuous passions be still: my soul obeyed the sacred dictates, while Truth and Friendship took full possession of my breast.

I hasted early the next morning from this dangerous place; and must own to you this action has given me a pleasure in reflection superior to all the gratifications of sense.

Your's, &c.

ALCANDER.

LETTER V.

To CARLOS, *from the same.*

AFTER your severest raillery on my conduct, I hope you will pardon me for being a reasonable creature, and not insist on my making an apology for following the dictates of Honour and Gratitude. To your cooler thoughts virtue may not, perhaps, appear so trivial and fantastic a thing; in your splenetic intervals Falsehood and Treachery will probably lose their charms, and put on an aspect of horror and deformity; when the sagacity of youth is past, and a few years have impaired your understanding, you may grow superstitious, and be whimsical enough to fancy friendship and truth are words of the most sacred importance. Since it is not impossible for you to fall into such errors yourself, you ought to pass a charitable censure on my principles and practice, however different from your own.

I have ventured to send you this careless translation of Tasso's *Enchanted Forest*. This beautiful fiction seems contrived to arm the soul with a noble resolution in whatever occurrence its virtues are called into action. Rinaldo's inflexibility, I hope, will keep me a little in countenance, though I have not the vanity to run a parallel between the young hero's exploit and mine.

Dear Carlos, adieu! be assured I am too much

your friend to leave any method untried for your reformation.

ALCANDER.

THE ENCHANTED FOREST.

[*Taken from Tasso's* JERUSALEM, *Book* XVIII.]

THE dawning light scarce hover'd in the east,
When young Rinaldo left his wonted rest;
Completely arm'd in all his martial pride,
A costly scarf was o'er his shoulders ty'd:
Unseen he pass'd along each silent tent,
And onward to the dreadful forest went.
'Twas now the season when the ling'ring Night
Disputes her empire with the rising light;
A rosy blush here paints the doubtful morn,
There glimm'ring stars th' uncertain shades adorn:
This scene the thoughtful hero entertain'd,
As on the steep of Olivet he gain'd;
The dawning lustre, and declining night,
With various beauties entertain his sight.
"Ye num'rous flaming lamps above," he cries,
"Which deck the lofty temple of the skies!
"Thou, Sun, whose face a golden splendour wears!
"Thou silver Moon, and all ye sparkling stars!
"What trifles to your glories are preferr'd!
"How little we celestial things regard!
"A sparkling glance, the lightning of a smile,
"Of heaven itself our easy hearts beguile."
Thus reas'ning, he the sacred hill ascends,
And humbly there, with decent rev'rence, bends,
Adoring; to the East he turns his eyes,
His thoughts unbounded reach the inmost skies.
Meanwhile the Morn in golden vestments rose,
Her visage with a bright vermilion glows:

New beams Rinaldo's crest and armour gild,
Which dart their lustre o'er the verdant field;
Refreshing breezes round him gently play,
And balmy odours on their wings convey;
While from her lap Aurora on his head
A cloud of pure celestial dews does spread;
Dipt in th' ethereal mist, a lucid white
His robes display, and stream with silver light;
Such, when the morning's cheerful rays appear,
Such lively looks the op'ning blossoms wear;
So looks, renew'd in all its glittering pride,
The serpent, when he casts his age aside.
The knight still to the wood his way pursu'd,
Nor any horror in its prospect view'd;
The fatal forest, whence, with sudden dread,
The bravest soldiers of the camp had fled,
Appears to him a kind inviting shade.
Advancing on, a soft melodious sound
Fills all the fair enchanted grove around:
The noise of murm'ring currents rolling by,
With sighing winds which thro' the branches fly;
The swan, in dying melancholy strains,
In concert with the nightingale, complains;
The organ, harp, and human voice, are found
Mingling their notes in one harmonious sound.
While, from above, as others had before,
The youth expects to hear loud thunders roar;
Instead of these, the songs of Syrens finds,
The chant of birds, with warbling waves and winds.
Amaz'd, he now his hasty steps suspends,
And forward now, with cautious paces, bends;
No obstacle his passage yet withstood
Besides an ample, smooth, transparent flood,
From whence a thousand riv'lets break away,
Which thro' the shades in wanton windings stray;

Their banks were with luxuriant verdure crown'd,
And painted flow'rs adorn'd the smiling ground.
Rinaldo paus'd, when instantly appear'd
A stately bridge, on golden arches rear'd,
Presenting cross the stream a spacious way,
Which he, undaunted, pass'd without delay;
Nor sooner touch'd the river's distant brinks,
But down the visionary structure sinks;
And what before in gentle waves roll'd by,
A torrent swells, and lifts its billows high;
No bounds the sudden inundation knows,
Rising like floods increas'd by melting snows.
The hero, fearless, still his course pursues,
And wheresoe'er he turns fresh wonder views;
For wheresoe'er he turns a sudden spring
Appears, and blooming flow'rs their odours bring;
The lily courts him, and the fragrant rose
At his approach with brighter crimson glows;
Their crystal arms the bubbling springs display,
And living fountains open in his way;
The branchy trees their verdant pride renew,
From ev'ry leaf distils ambrosial dew;
The waters, winds, and tuneful birds, again,
Join'd with the voice and lute, begin their soothing strain;
Nor yet appears to whom the melting song,
The human voice, and charming lute belong.
Suspended he remains, and scarce believes
His waking thoughts, or what his sense perceives;
When issuing from the forest's lofty shade,
He finds an ample plain before him spread;
A wond'rous myrtle in the midst appear'd,
Aloft in air its stately head was rear'd;
Its height the palm and cypress far surpass'd,
And all beneath a closer shadow cast;
Around the leafy arms extended wide,
In pow'ring stood, of all the grove the pride:

On the prodigious plant he fix'd his eyes,
Till more prodigious things his mind surprise.
A pregnant oak with sudden rupture pants,
While from its trunk a blooming virgin starts;
Numbers like her their hollow prisons rend,
And on the plain in shining robes descend.
So dress'd the graceful Cynthia haunts the groves,
Such are her nymphs, and such the goddess moves.
Their folding vests above the knee were ty'd,
Their slender legs the silken buskins hide;
Their snowy arms were bare: their locks behind
Dishevell'd hung, and wanton in the wind.
Like these appear the beauteous sylvan race,
Who o'er the lawns the flying prey they trace:
No bow indeed they hold, nor quivers wore,
But warbling lutes in their fair hands they bore;
A circle round the wond'ring knight they made,
And danc'd in artful measures as they play'd.
"Hail, lovely youth!" they sung, "our lady's care!
"For thee these soft recesses we prepare;
"For thee she fondly languishes all day,
"And wastes her life in restless fires away;
"These groves thy absence lately seem'd to mourn,
"But all look fresh and gay at thy return."
While with these melting strains they charm his ears,
A sweeter voice he from the myrtle hears,
And issuing thence a lovelier nymph appears.
If ancient times, with pious awe inspir'd,
Silenus in his antick form admir'd,
What had the superstitious dotage been,
The mad effect of this surprising scene!
Her shape was human, but a heav'nly grace,
And beauty all divine, adorn'd her face.
With doubtful eyes Rinaldo views the fair,
And soon recalls Armidia's tempting air;

Then, with a soft alluring pensive look,
Which meant a thousand tender things, she spoke:
" Art thou return'd, the cause of all my pain?
" Do I behold these fatal eyes again?
" Dost thou, at last, ungrateful man! relent,
" And pity my fond youth in sorrow spent?
" Or as an enemy pursue me here?
" For this thy arms and threat'ning looks declare:
" But I no enemy, no traitor, fear'd,
" When o'er the flood the golden bridge I rear'd;
" When gaudy flow'rs along thy path were strow'd,
" And living springs to entertain thee flow'd."
Approaching nearer then, she softly cries,
" Remove this envious helmet's vain disguise,
" And let me view again those charming eyes."
With that a moving tear she fondly shed,
While from her cheeks the hasty blushes fled;
Then sigh'd, and downward cast her lovely eyes,
And soft complaints and kind reproaches tries:
Her words the coldest adamant would move,
And melt the most obdurate heart to love.
The youthful hero feels the kindling fires,
And timely from his dang'rous foe retires;
Again he scorns her wiles, and fiercely drew
His shining sword, and at the myrtle flew.
Armida runs before, with eager haste,
Then twining round, her darling plant embrac'd;
" Oh stay," she cries, " stay thy inhuman hand,
" Or let thy weapon in my breast be stain'd."
Unmov'd and deaf to all her pray'rs, he stood,
And lifts his sword to hew the fatal wood.
Th' enchantress soon another method tries,
And as in dreams uncouth chimeras rise,
She stalks a monstrous bulk before his eyes;
A dusky gloom her changing face o'erspread,
Vanish'd the snowy white and youthful red:

Then like Briareus, with his hundred hands,
A mighty giant in his view she stands;
And fifty flaming swords at once she wields,
And shakes aloft as many blazing shields;
Her nymphs appear like horrid Cyclops arm'd,
But nothing his undaunted heart alarm'd.
The martial youth his sounding strokes renew'd,
While hollow groans the sounding strokes ensu'd;
Stupendous terrors fill'd the darken'd place,
Resembling now the black infernal space;
Thunder'd the louring heav'ns, with dreadful sound,
Echo'd in subterranean vaults the ground;
Trembled the earth, lighten'd the flashing skies,
While warring winds from every quarter rise.
Rinaldo stands the raging tempest's frown,
Till one fierce stroke fells the tall myrtle down;
Th' enchantment ends, the phantoms disappear,
The storms were hush'd, the heav'ns serenely clear.

LETTER VI.

To ALBANUS.

You seem at present suspended between virtue and vice; your mind is in such a mysterious situation that it is not easy to determine to what class you belong: one can hardly call you a saint, the flattery would be two apparent: and yet it would be a little uncharitable to put you in the opposite rank, where your own modesty has placed you: but my business is not to dispute what you are, but but to give you the information you desire, and,

from my own experience, to resolve on which side the advantage of pleasure falls.

You imagine I have acted in both the characters of saint and sinner, and tried the extremes of virtue and vice. In the last I am too much experienced; but this makes me more capable of passing a censure; for I was a sort of philosophic libertine, and pursued pleasure for the sake of demonstration. I paused, I reasoned, I made critical reflections on every enjoyment; I proposed something beyond gratifying a low and sensual inclination; mine was a deliberate search after happiness; while the method was wrong, my end was right; but every guilty experiment brought its own conviction, and left me restless and disappointed.

Sometimes I exclaimed in prose, sometimes in verse; I burlesqued the vanities of life and the weakness of human nature; I turned moralist, looked grave, and acted soberly: but this was a situation too cold for my temper, it was neither sleeping nor waking; this supine indolence was but a poor exchange for the jovial activities I had resigned, nor could I assent to that spiritless maxim, that *Virtue was its own reward*, if there was no future expectation: *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, appeared to me a much more rational conclusion.

However, this deliberation, this pause, this moral essay and restraint of my passions, was the first

step I made towards real happiness. In the absence of sensual amusements my thoughts found leisure for a nobler application; my soul grew familiar with itself and sought acquaintance with intellectual beings: distressed with the vicissitudes of mortal things, it traced back its own divine original, and claimed paternal refuge from the great Spring of all existence. I felt the attraction strong as the bands of Nature; that felicity I had blindly sought, the unknown God I had ignorantly worshipped, now revealed himself to me, as the sovereign Good, and my peculiar bliss.

How an almighty agent acts no language of men can describe; but I felt the sacred influence, I heard the heavenly sound, the soft melodious voice, calling me away from earthly vanities; while a ray of celestial beauty sparkling on my soul eclipsed the glories of the world, and darkened all the pride of nature; the mists of ignorance and error vanished before the divine illumination, which, with a pleasing evidence, compelled my assent to the glorious truths it proposed; my apprehensions were enlarged, and a sanctity of disposition infused; those heights of virtue, which I once thought impracticable, now appeared easy, and attended with ineffable delight, such as gave me some delicious prelibations

Of those immortal banquets, those rich draughts
Of vital pleasure, which my thirsty soul
Shall drink for ever in——

These are no fantastic delusions, but real and divine enjoyments, such as enlarge the mind, and give it a nobler disposition, while, conscious of its own grandeur, it rests in nothing below boundless and immortal felicity.

This is what you seem anxiously to inquire after: how happy shall I be, if my experience can direct you in such an important search! You will excuse the sending you these negligent lines on a subject so superior to my genius.

On HAPPINESS.

WHATEVER diff'rent paths mankind pursue,
Oh, Happiness! 'tis thee we keep in view:
'Tis thee in ev'ry action we intend,
The noblest motive, and superiour end!
Thou dost the scarcely-finish'd soul incline;
It's first desire, and conscious thought, is thine;
Our infant breasts are sway'd by thee alone,
When pride and jealousy are yet unknown.
Through life's obscure and wild variety,
Our stedfast wishes never start from thee:
Thou art of all our waking thoughts the theme,
We court thee too in ev'ry nightly dream:
Th' immortal flame with equal ardour glows,
Nor one short moment's intermission knows:
Whether to courts or temples we repair,
With restless zeal we search thee ev'ry where;
Whether the roads that to perdition lead,
Or those which guide us to the stars we tread,
Thine is the hope, th' inestimable prize,
The glorious mark on which we fix our eyes!
Thy charms th' enamour'd Libertine entice,
Through all the wild destructive paths of vice;

Th' advent'rous man refines on sin, and makes,
In search of thee, to hell new-beaten tracks;
Enchanting pleasure dances in his sight,
And tempts him forward by a treach'rous light:
But while thy flatt'ring smiles his thoughts inflame,
Thou prov'st to him a mere fantastic name,
A fair delusion, and a pleasing cheat,
A gaudy vision, and a soft deceit;
Which, while the wretch pursues with eager pace,
And seems to overtake thee in the race,
An airy phantom mocks his close embrace;
His arms in vain the sportive shade would fold;
Still like a gliding ghost it slips his fondest hold:
The disappointment heightens yet his rage,
And tempts him with fresh ardour to engage:
Successless, but unweary'd in the strife,
He still pursues thee to the verge of life;
With life compell'd his dotage to resign,
The last despairing sigh he breathes is thine.
The pious man directs his vows to thee,
And proves thy most pathetic votary.
Virtue itself, ev'n virtue he regards
But as thy favour the fatigue rewards:
To silent shades and solitude obscure,
Far from the world thou dost his steps allure;
But there he lives retir'd, a glorious Epicure,
And gladly quits the fleeting joys of sense
In search of bliss more lasting and intense;
Not such as the fond lover's heart beguiles,
When without art his yielding mistress smiles;
Not such as fills the youthful hero's mind,
When wreaths of victory his temples bind:
His thoughts a nobler luxury would prove,
Such as the bless'd immortals know above;

A spark divine, like theirs, his breast inflames,
Enjoyments all divine, like theirs he claims,
Licentious and unbounded in his aims.
To pleasure's sacred spring his soul aspires,
There only hopes to quench his infinite desires:
Not envious Hell the passion can suppress,
Fir'd by thy name, alluring Happiness!
Undaunted he maintains the gen'rous strife,
And struggles for thee to the close of life;
Then joyful clasps thee in his dying arms,
And yields his breath, possess'd of all thy charms.

This is the conclusion to which I stand, after the exactest trial of sensual and intellectual pleasures; without hesitation I give my voice on the side of Virtue, and this is the gayest period of my life, unruffled with adversity or disappointment, in the affluence of fortune, and the luxury of youth, with a mind capacious of bliss, and panting after happiness.

In this situation you cannot object against the severity of my temper. However, as few persons care to be wise at other people's expence, I cannot expect that, without any farther trial, you will acquiesce in the judgment of

Your most humble servant.

LETTER VII.

To Lucius.

It was you that proposed this subject to my Muse, but I have hardly the vanity to hope the perfor-

mance will please a judgment so exact as your's. However, it is entirely submitted to your censure, by

Your most humble servant,
LINDAMOR.

A POEM ON LOVE.

Assist my doubtful Muse, propitious Love,
Let all my soul the sacred impulse prove:
For thine's a holy unpolluted flame,
Howe'er the Libertine profanes thy name;
Howe'er, with impious cant, Hypocrisy,
And senseless Supersition, blemish thee:
The pure result of sober reason thou:
Thy laws the strictest honour must allow:
Thy laws each vicious thought controul;
From thee Devotion takes its flaming wings,
Thou giv'st the noblest motions to the soul,
And govern'st all its springs.
To great attempts thou gen'rous minds dost move,
And only such are privileg'd to love;
Th' heroic race, the brightest names of old,
Were all thy glorious votaries enroll'd.
Without thee, human life
A tedious round of circling cares would be
A curs'd fatigue, continual strife,
And tiresome vanity.
Thy charms, our restless grief controul,
And calm the stormy motions of the soul;
Before thee, pride and enmity,
With all infernal passions, fly;
And could'st thou in the realms below
But once display thy beauteous face,
The damn'd a short redress might know,
And ev'ry terror fly the place.

From thee, one bright unclouded smile
Would all the torments there beguile;
Thy smiles th' eternal tempest could assuage,
And make the damn'd forget their rage;
The sulph'rous waves would cease to roar,
And calmly glide along the silent shore.
Had Orpheus (as 'tis fabled) through the ground
To Hell the gloomy passage found,
His warbling voice, his melting lyre,
Nor artful touches on the trembling string,
Had ne'er obtain'd his bold desire,
Nor charm'd the furies with their sullen king:
But Love his tender theme, had Love been nam'd,
That potent sound alone had all their malice tam'd.
On thee the Graces and Delights attend,
On thy propitious influence
Our gayest hours depend;
Whatever charms the soul or sense,
Beauty and sacred harmony,
Accomplish'd Love! belongs to thee.
To thee his shining graces Strephon owes
His just ideas, and expressions fit;
To thee Cleora owes that sprightly wit,
Which from her lips in easy language flows.
The mute creation owns thy sway,
And things inanimate thy laws obey;
At thy command the first confusion ceas'd,
Chaos and wild Disorder were appeas'd;
Discord and fierce Antipathy grew mild,
The gleams of light through yielding darkness smil'd,
And warring elements were reconcil'd.
Nature begun a steady course,
Govern'd by central charms, and sympathetic force.
But in the blissful skies alone
Almighty Love! thy pow'r is fully known:

There they view thy charming face,
Painted with endless smiles, and ever-blooming grace,
Thy gentle torch burns there for ever bright,
And scatters round a mild propitious light;
All feel its pleasing influence,
While pure desires thy golden shafts dispense.
Th' immortal lovers, crown'd with fragrant flow'rs,
In rosy shades, and blissful bow'rs,
To thee devote their happy hours,
While active joys, too noble for disguise,
And vital pleasures, sparkle in their eyes;
To thee alone, great Love, their heav'n they owe,
The boundless source whence all their blessings flow,
Thy sacred flame
Does ev'ry heav'nly breast inspire,
And tune the strings of each celestial lyre;
In flow'ry vales, to every blissful stream,
With melting notes, they celebrate thy name:
Backward they roll the long extent
Of ages infinite, and sing thy great descent:
No fabled Venus gave thee birth
At Cyprus; yet the goddesss was not nam'd,
Nor at Idalia, nor at Paphos fam'd;
Nor yet was feign'd from foaming seas to rise;
For yet no seas appear'd, or fountains flow'd,
Nor yet, distinguish'd in the skies,
Her radiant planet glow'd.
But thou wast long ere Motion sprung its race,
Ere Chaos and immeasurable Space
Resign'd their useless rights to elemental Place;
Before the sparkling lamps on high
Were kindled up, and hung around the sky
Before the Sun led on the circling Hours,
Or vital seeds produc'd their active powers;
Before the first Intelligences strung
Their golden harps, and soft preludiums sung
To Love, the mighty cause whence their existence sprung,

Th' ineffable Divinity
His own resemblance meets in thee:
By this thy glorious lineage thou dost prove
Thy high descent; for God himself is Love.

LETTER VIII.

From SYLVIANA, *giving an account of her manner of life before her marriage with the Earl of* ——

Madam,

YOUR curiosity is very obliging, in desiring to know my manner of life 'till I had the honour of being married to my Lord ——. The account, indeed, would be perfectly insignificant without that circumstance; it is only my relation to him that gives me a concern for the decorum and propriety of my conduct in the high station to which he has advanced me.

I must own, that my scrupulous dissent from some fashionable freedoms makes my behaviour appear somewhat singular and precise among the gallant part of of the world; but I hope, in this general toleration, I may, with indemnity, be a Christian, though not a prude, at sixteen. If this is an error, the prejudice of education must be my excuse, which keeps me from giving my assent to many of the genteel maxims of the age: nor will you be surprised at my nicety, when you know by what precepts the early part of my life has been governed.

My father was a country clergyman, a person of exemplary piety, who, with a benefice of three hundred a year, treated his poor parishioners with great hospitality, and made a decent provision for his own family.

My mother was bred a Dissenter, and continued such, 'till either her esteem for my father, or the force of his arguments, prevailed with her to join in communion with the national church.

I was the eldest of three daughters, which were all the children they had. We were carefully instructed in the rules of justice and truth, and bred in the greatest sanctity of manners; no excuse but sickness ever detained us on Sundays from the public worship; nor were the intervals spent in any idle amusements; the whole day was sacred, and observed with just solemnity: through the rest of the week prayers were constantly read mornings and evenings in the family; nor would my mother ever suffer cards or dancing in the house.

My two sisters were the prettiest demure things that ever were seen; they applied themselves with great diligence to assist my mother in any of her domestic concerns: but my temper being more sprightly, house-wifery and plain-work were my aversion; reading was my prevailing attatchment, and I had turned over every book in my father's library except Latin and Greek: but here was not one play or novel for my entertainment: how-

ever, I was supplied with amusements of this kind by my Lady Worthy's youngest daughter, who was our neighbour, and was pleased to honour me with some degree of intimacy. But I perused these authors with great secrecy, and not without some inward remorse; this sort of reading being against my father's severe injunctions, and the pious rules I had been taught.

This was my manner of life 'till I was fifteen, when a brother of my mother's, a Turkey merchant, died, and having no child, left me twenty thousand pounds, with only some small legacies to my sisters. This advance of fortune gave me some distinction with my Lady Worthy, who, about the same time had a fine summer-house painting; the story was, Diana hunting with her nymphs. Her Ladyship desired my mother that I might be drawn for one of the virgin train.

Some time after this painting was finished, my Lord——came accidently into these parts of the country; and waiting on my Lady Worthy, as they were in the summer-house he took particular notice (I know not why) of the nymph for whom I had sat to the painter. Her Ladyship, finding my Lord a little inquisitive, ordered a servant to call me to drink tea with them: I obeyed, without the least suspicion what was the motive of her command.

I had hitherto looked on every mortal man with equality and indifference, nor found any thing to

answer the description of poetical heroes and dramatic beaus: but the moment I saw my Lord, every grace, every charm, appeared real, which before had pleased my imagination in agreeable fictions; the enchanting form, the fatal glance, the resistless smile, the gentle, the prevailing accent; Love, with his whole artillery, seemed to insult me, and never more entirely subdued a mind so artless and unexperienced; however, to conceal my disorder, I withdrew as soon as the company would permit.

But how transformed was my soul from that guiltless calm I had 'till now enjoyed! The equality of my temper was broken, my thoughts had all a different turn; I went to church, indeed, but said my prayers as mechanically as the clock strikes; I joined in singing the psalms, but with no more understanding than the chimes repeat a tune to which they are set: not only the next world, but this, was effaced from my memory; there were no flowers in the field, nor stars in the sky; my whole attention was fixed on the lovely youth, his idea was still in view; or if any other object interrupted the pleasing reverie, it was only to give me vexation. I was angry with every mortal for not looking so handsome, nor talking so agreeably, as the charming man I admired.

I was some tedious days in suspence whether my Lord had one favourable thought of me; but my

doubts were agreeably satisfied, when I found he had desired my Lady Worthy to procure my father's consent in order to make his addresses to me; my father embraced the offer with a just sense of the honour that was done him.

For my part, I had never practised any disguise, and was unacquainted with all forms but such as were the dictates of Nature and Virtue; nor was it possible for me to conceal the tender inclination; it was as visible in my silence as the most pathetic words could have made it. After I knew my Lord's character, and was convinced of his affection for me, I had a sort of vanity in owning a sense of his merit; this, I thought, justified the height of my passsion; nor could I find any reason to violate my native sincerity, and affect indifference, where it would have been a crime to have been really insensible.

My noble lover expressed some impatience to conclude the affair, which was done with great secrecy and expedition. He suffered but one servant to attend him; and was so obliging to stay a month after our marriage in my father's family. The scenes of low life were a diverting novelty to him, while love and innocence made the hours glide smoothly on. This period was all pastoral and romantic; the Golden Age seemed to be renewed with Ovid's Oenone: I could have wished the noble youth divested of his hereditary honours, pos-

sesed only of a snowy flock, and graced with no distinction but that of the lovely Swain:

> Then unmolested we had liv'd, and free
> From those vexatious forms which greatness brings;
> While rocks and meadows, shades, and purling springs,
> The flow'ry valley, and the gloomy grove,
> Had heard of no superior name to Love.

However, I did not yet know the toils of grandeur, nor feel the effects of my splendid vassalage; I lived my own way, dressed and undressed myself. My mother, since the advance of my fortune, had kept me in fine lace caps, and clean silk nightgowns; and, as I had plenty of flaxen hair falling into natural curls, my dress was easily adjusted, and seemed to please my Lord exceedingly. The little waiting on I had was by Cicely, my mother's head servant; I had no notion of the *grand monde*, nor the part I was to act in it.

I had never seen London; the Mall, Hyde-park, the Drawing-room, and Theatre, were less known to me than than the planetary worlds.

In this state of nature, of darkness, and original simplicity, imagine to yourself what must be my perplexity, when my Lord carried me with him to make my first appearance in town, among the congratulations of his numerous friends! I found myself among a rank of people to whose language, habits, and manners, I was as much a stranger as if I had been in a foreign country.

My Lord had desired a sister, who lived with him, to procure every thing proper for me to appear with, and she spared no cost in jewels, or whatever else vanity itself could wish. She had been solicitous in her choice of a woman and chamber-maid for me, and they were really two of the finest people I had ever seen in my life. My woman (being much older than myself) I looked on her as my superior, and could hardly forbear making an apology for the trouble I gave her; I spoke to her in very gentle and submissive terms; nor was it possible for me to get rid of the secret veneration which the gravity of her countenance gave me; however, my lively temper was apt to make some gay excursions; when I was at first initiated into the mysteries of dress, I was not quite so serious as she seemed to think the importance of the affair required.

While my head was dressing I was merely passive, as long as Mrs Dupin suffered me to sit reading; I left the ball on my shoulders to be adorned as she thought fit; which, after two hours toil, I sometimes found swelled to such an enormous size, with flowers, feathers, and bits of ribbon, that I could not help begging her to reduce it to a dimension more agreeable to my shape, which, being slender, did not require a globe of that magnitude to adorn it.

But I was generally more inclined to cry than to

laugh on this occasion; the hours thus spent were an unsupportable fatigue to me, nor could I answer to my conscience for such a vain expence of time; my being had a superior end; I was formed for immortality, which grand concern forbid me spending more hours at the toilette than in my devotions. I had been taught these antiquated maxims; and however ridiculous they might appear in the gay moments of health, the approaches of death, I knew, would set them in their full force and unquestioned evidence.

However, I had no design in dressing but to please my Lord; it was only with regard to him I was concerned for the figure I made in public; the flattery I heard on my beauty gave me more confusion than joy; nor could I account for the design of those addresses.

I very innocently told a beau that followed me that I was married; at which he burst into a loud laugh. It was some surprise to me to find him so gay at the discovery of what I thought would have sunk him into despair; I could not but wonder, that the man who had just before been languishing and dying should be so overjoyed to find his pretensions lost, and his case hopeless; for I really thought he made love with an honest intention to marry me, only he had mistaken my circumstances.

My next lover was the most intimate friend my

Lord had; the fine things he said I took for raillery; indeed, it appeared ill-jesting with such a sacred thing as friendship, and the honour of a family; however, I concealed his extravagance, and treated him with a coldness so real and unaffected that he soon recovered himself.

But you may easily imagine what a sound these gallant proposals must have to one so unacquainted with the modish world, and who had never heard those vices named but with terms of infamy and reproach.

After this account of myself, you will not wonder to find me so little at ease in the high station to which I am raised. With what regret do I look back to the inglorious shades, the humble scenes, of my past tranquillity! I was a stranger to ambition; but love seduced me from those peaceful retreats, where my first happy days were spent; it is only my affection for my Lord that helps me to support this illustrious bondage, this splendid misery; but as sincerely as I love him, I cannot without a sigh, recall the harmless freedom, the unmolested innocence, in which the earliest part of my life was passed; and am surprised to find myself the object of most people's envy, while, in reality, I merit their compassion. I am, without ceremony,

Madam,

Your's, &c.

LETTER IX.

To Mr A * * **

I HAVE been contemplating on the period of all human glory among the tombs in Westminster Abbey; here the most towering ambition finds its limits; insulting Death has fixed the bounds, and pronounced the imperial mandate, "Hitherto "shalt thou go, and no farther:" and "Here "shall thy proud waves be stayed." The wildest boast of mortal vanity yields to the dreadful Conqueror; the glory of Nature, with all the accomplishments of Art, are humbled together in the dust:

Here, in one horrid ruin, lyes
The great, the fair, the young, the wise:
Th' ambitious King, whose boundless mind,
Scarce to a world could be confin'd,
Now, content with narrower room,
Lyes crowded in this marble tomb;
Death triumphs o'er the boasted state,
The vain distinctions of the great:
Here in one common heap they ly,
And, eloquent, in silence cry,
"Ambition is but vanity!"

And see, this sculptur'd tomb contains
Of beauty the abhorr'd remains;
That face which none unmov'd could view,
Has lost th' enchanting rosy hue:
Those once resistless sparkling eyes,
No more can heedless hearts surprise:
That form, which ev'ry charm could boast,
In loathsome rottenness is lost.

See there the youth, whose cheerful bloom
Promis'd a train of years to come;
Whose soft address and graceful air,
Had scarce obtain'd the yielding fair,
When Fate derides th' expected joys,
And all his flatt'ring hope destroys.
There sleep the Bards, whose lofty lays
Have crown'd their names with lasting praise;
Who, though eternity they give,
While heroes in their numbers live,
Yet these resign their tuneful breath,
And Wit must yield to mightier Death.
Ev'n I, the lowest of the throng,
Unskill'd in verse, or artful song,
Shall shortly shroud my humble head,
And mix with them among the dead.

I am now reconciling myself to these gloomy abodes; I would grow familiar, I would contract an intimacy with death, in order to meet the grisly phantom without consternation.

But what I am here contemplating is only the dark side of the prospect, which disappears whenever my thoughts turn to the bright reverse; death is then no more a meagre skeleton, followed with a train of terrors, but comes in an angel's form, with a gay retinue of heavenly loves and graces; he comes the kind messenger of my liberty and happiness, with a smiling aspect, beckoning me away from these stormy regions, to the worlds of unclouded light; the scenes of immortality are opened before me; the palm, the starry crown, with all the bright rewards of virtue, appear in

view: Oh, when will the happy period come, which ends this mortal story! But my friendship for you shall outlive the date of this transitory existence, and be the same when I am no more, after the formalities of this lower world.

Your humble servant,

THEOPHILUS.

LETTER X.

*To Lady **** from a Sylph.*

You will find this Letter on a bank of violets, where I have often the pleasure to seat myself near you, unseen; and never fail of being entertained with that vivacity and innocent wit that sparkles in your conversation. However negligent you are of your invisible admirer, your earliest part of life has been my care; my services claim the pre-eminence of all my mortal rivals, and give me a right to make my pretensions before your heart admits an earthly passion.

I have followed your early rambles over the flowery lawns, guarded you on the verge of murmuring streams, and screened your beauty from the sultry noon; I have fanned you with my golden plumes, and breathed the fragrance of the spring about you; by me the music of the groves has been improved, while I have joined with the feathered chorus to divert you; the nightingale for

you has prolonged her melodious strain, and from some flowery spray entertained you with her nightly serenade.

These harmless gallantries, instead of molesting have indulged your tranquillity; for mine is an affection suited to your guiltless inclination, and consistent with the most refined virtue. Indeed, this is the superior charm, the powerful attraction, that has gained you a celestial lover; those divine graces, those sparklings of goodness and generosity, that sacred impression of virtue Heaven has stamped on your soul, charm me beyond your lovely person; and yet I view your blooming beauty with delight, and find a guiltless transport in your smiles; I am captivated with those looks of benevolence and peace, which scatter universal joy and alacrity about you; the guiltless gaiety of your temper and inoffensive wit divert me; I love to mimic the sweetness of your voice, and repeat the charming accent in a thousand sportive echoes.

Were not the view of etherial beauty forbidden to any of mortal race, I might insult all human vanity, and defy the most glorious rival among the sons of men; was I permitted to appear in the rosy bloom of celestial youth, with my golden zone, my purple wings and glittering tiara, I should outshine the most splendid birth-night beau.

But I am not permitted to convince you of my superiority till your date of mortal life is expired;

and then, if you continue stedfast to the rules of virtue, you shall be mine by all the engagements of celestial love: I will lead you in triumph to the blissful fields and charming bowers, surpassing the most poetical description of Cyprian groves or Hesperian gardens. What you call palaces and magnificent seats are but dens, but dwellings in the dust, compared to the dazzling habitations of the aerial race: the region is for ever calm, the skies for ever unclouded:

No stormy winter enters there,
'Tis jovial spring through all the year:
Soft gales through groves of myrtle blow,
The streams o'er golden pebbles flow;
Fresh Youth and Love their sportive train
Lead o'er the ever verdant plain;
Etherial forms in bright array
Along the blissful currents stray;
Or wander thro' Elysian groves,
Or banquet in the gay alcoves;
And oft in amarinthine bow'rs
Repose on fragrant beds of flowers,
While Music, with her soothing strains,
Warbles through the woods and plains:
The hills, the dales, and fountains round,
With heav'nly harmony resound.

But numbers fail, human language loses its energy and grows insipid, while I would paint the wonders of the immortal world; neither can I describe, nor will you be able to conceive, these transporting scenes, till the happy time comes when

they shall be unveiled in surprising pomp before you. Till then, I am

Your invisible admirer,

ARIEL.

LETTER XI.

To EUSEBIUS.

IT is with great pleasure I obey you in discovering the present situation of my thoughts, since the tranquillity I enjoy in this retirement is partly owing to those pious principles you endeavoured to instil into my early youth.

You was well informed of my passion for Lady Diana ——; nor can you have forgot how many excuses I framed to my father to prevent his design of sending me into foreign parts, till all events succeeded to my wish, and I was married to the charming maid. But the nuptial pomp was hardly past before Death blasted my happiness, and snatched the lovely prize from my arms.

The only way I could then think of to divert the violence of my grief was travelling, hoping by variety of objects to efface the painful impression. Accordingly I made the tour of France and Italy, amusing myself with whatever was grand or entertaining. I conversed with men of sense and merit, and some times was favoured with the society of women of distinguished beauty and reputation: I

indulged myself in all the little gaieties of life, within the limits of reason and morality; but nothing could blot the image of my charming wife from my soul. I brought back my affection for the fair departed saint to the mournful mansion where I enjoyed and lost her.

But here leisure and reflection had a better effect than a thoughtless series of diversions. Though my course of life had always been regular, and governed by the rules of sobriety, yet, till now, I was a stranger, except in form, to any thing of devotion, nor had ever experienced the ineffable satisfaction of a virtuous mind in its secret addresses to the Supreme Being. My soul had not yet reflected on its own grandeur, nor considered itself formed for an infinite and unchangeable felicity.

Those grave and sublime authors, which were once the useless ornaments of my library, are now my serious entertainment: by these I have been directed to look beyond all the perishing scenes of Nature to that immutable state of happiness, which, after a short probation, attends the practice of virtue. My thoughts grow calm, my passions appease, the goods and evils of time vanish into nothing, at the prospect of boundless and immortal pleasure.

The great temple of the skies, the spangled arch of heaven, is frequently the place of my devotion; the open view of the gay creation, or the lonely so-

litude of a wood, inspire me with a sacred warmth. But, oh! when the propitious Divinity, by some divine emanation, makes me sensible of his presence, with what contempt do I look back on the lessening world! how tasteless, how insipid, are all its amusements! how calm, how peaceful, in those happy intervals, are the regions of my soul! its wishes are answered, and all its desires appeased. I have enough, I ask no more: can they languish for the streams who drink at the overflowing fountain? His benignity is better than life, immortal pleasure is in his smiles, and who he favours must be necessarily blessed.

Thus, abstracted from human things, I converse with the great Spirit of the universe, and in the rapture of my thoughts often address him in such soliloquies as these:

"It is the dignity of my nature, oh, Supreme of "beings, to adore and praise thee! But how art "thou to be extolled by mortal man? the language "of Paradise, the strains of immortality, fall short "of thy perfections; the first-born sons of light "lose themselves in blissful admiration, in search "of thy excellency; even they with silent ecstacy "adore, while, veiled with ineffable splendour,

"The bright, the bless'd, Divinity is known
"And comprehended by himself alone.

"Who can conceive the extent of that power "which out of nothing brought materials for a

" rising world, and from a gloomy chaos bid the " harmonious universe appear!

" Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar
" Stood rul'd, stood vast Infinitude confin'd."

Milton.

" At thy word the pillars of the sky were framed, " and its beauteous arches reared; thy breath kind- " led the stars, adorn'd the moon with silver rays, " and gave the sun its flaming splendour.

" Thy glory in her silent course the moon,
" And nightly lamps in their obscure sojourn,
" The morning-star with its bright circle crown'd,
" And early blushes of the day, reveal;
" The circling sun thy greatness manifests,
" Whether ascending from the eastern wave,
" With glancing smiles, he cheers the dewy fields;
" Or mounted to the zenith's lofty height,
" He blazes with transcendent glory round;
" Or down the steep of heav'n he rolls amain,
" And ends his flaming progress in the sea:
" From east to west thy grandeur he proclaims,
" And thro' his radiant kingdoms spreads thy praise."

" Thou didst prepare for the waters their capa- " cious bed, and set bounds to the raging billows; " by thee the hills were crowned with plenty, and " the vallies dressed in their flowery pride; the " summer and winter, the shady night and the " bright revolutions of the day, are thine; in all " the wonderful effects of Nature we adore and " confess thy power.

" Thou rid'st upon the wild tempestuous wind,
" And flying storms obey thy potent voice;

" Sublime on clouds thy dark pavilion set,
" With shades and gloomy majesty involv'd:
" Thy hands the pointed lightnings lance around,
" While peals of thunder shake the firmament;
" At thy approach the kindling forests smoke,
" And from their base the trembling mountains start;
" The rivers ebb and flow at thy command,
" Observe their wonted course, or run reverse:
" At thy rebuke the frighted waves divide,
" And with stupendous motion backward roll
" Their crystal volumes to their inmost spring.
" Thou all things canst; thy mighty mandate heard,
" Necessity and Nature are no more:——
" Th' obedient elements resign their league,
" And wonderful effects attest the God!"

These, my dear friend, are the entertainments that brighten my solitude, and free my soul from its former engagements: those fading graces, on which I once doated, vanish before a superior excellence, as stars before the rising sun; instead of repining I adore, I justify the great dispensing Power that has removed the darling of my affections to fix them on immortal beauty. I have lost nothing amiable or attractive, but what is found with divine advantage in the fair Original.

I know you will congratulate me on this happy change: it must please you to find that your pious instructions, joined to the sanctity of your example, have not entirely been lost on,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Amintor.

LETTER XII.

To the same.

Sir,

I HAVE obeyed your commands in sending the inclosed; you will not require an apology for an essay on this transporting subject: Joy and Gratitude will speak, however disproportioned the expressions.

On our SAVIOUR'S *Nativity.*

VICTORIOUS Love! how uncontroul'd thy pow'r!
How great thy triumph on that glorious hour!
The high-rais'd thrones above look'd down to see
The vanquish'd God a captive led by thee.
His splendour in mortality disguis'd,
The Principalities of heav'n surpris'd;
Th' indulgent skies smil'd on the happy birth,
While peace and joyful wonder hush'd the earth.
Fly, rigid Winter, with thy horid face,
And let the soft and lovely Spring take place;
Oh! come thou fairest season of the year,
With garlands deck'd and verdant robes appear;
And once produce the Summer's various cost,
Whatever sweets her flow'ry stores can boast:
Full canisters of Sharon's roses spread,
And dress with art th' illustrious infant's bed;
Rifle the gardens, search the painted fields,
For all the blooming glories Nature yields.
But, O ye products of the earth, how poor,
To heav'n's enamell'd plains, are all your store!
Perpetual greens, and never-fading flow'rs,
Enrich with soft perfumes th' immortal bow'rs;

And yet he left the bright ethereal ſeats
For theſe cold regions and obſcure retreats.
Be huſh'd, ye Winds, no angry tempeſt rove,
But ſink in gentle whiſpers through the grove;
With all Arabia load your balmy wings,
And breathe the fragrance of ten thouſand ſprings.
Begin, you ſweet muſicians of the air!
Let Nature all her ſoothing ſounds prepare;
Let tuneful Art her various meaſures bring
Each melting tone, and ev'ry warbling ſtring;
Let pſalt'ries, harps, and the loud cymbal ring;
Let the ſhrill trumpets raiſe their ſprightly voice,
While Carmel and high Lebanon rejoice.
He comes, O Jacob, thy long promis'd King!
Celeſtial envoys the glad tidings bring:
O'er earth's wide compaſs to the diſtant main,
With truth and perfect juſtice he ſhall reign.
The ſparkling ſkies ſhall tarniſh and decay,
The ſun be quench'd, and ſtars ſhall fade away;
But he ſhall riſe with a propitious light,
Stand at high-noon, and ſhine divinely bright.

I ſhall now leave you to your own ſublimer contemplation on this unbounded theme, and ſubſcribe myſelf,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

AMINTOR.

LETTER XIII.

To a gentleman in France, from his Sister; giving him a relation of her lover's misfortunes.

My dear Brother,

As my passion for Valerius had, in its beginning, your approbation, you will not blame my constancy at a juncture when the unhappy youth has no other consolation. His misfortunes have brought those virtues into view which, in the height of prosperity, he never found occasion to exert; and, as his merit rises, you will not reproach me in finding my attachment to him more steady and resolved than in the splendour of his fortune.

You know how much my father piques himself on his quality, and how averse he was, when you left us, to Valerius's proposal, on no other account but his being a citizen, though a man of great virtue and wealth. However, this last motive, after some deliberation, prevailed; I was suffered to receive his addresses, and every thing was preparing to celebrate the marriage.

Valerius had always behaved himself in so obsequious a manner to his father, that he put a considerable stock into his hands, which the young merchant had improved by two or three successful voyages into Turkey; so that it was in his power to make a settlement vastly above my fortune, and far beyond my father's expectation; but while

the lawyers were busy in drawing up the articles, an unexpected misfortune put a stop to the whole affair.

The father of Valerius was an honest man, but exceeding credulous, and was (unknown to his son) drawn into many engagements for the debts of an extravagant brother, to whose interest the compassionate old man was too much attached; he soon found his error, being surprised with several arrests on his brother's account for more than his whole estate could answer.

The unhappy youth was quickly informed of his father's distress, and flew to his relief with all the speed that filial piety could give. One of their friends, who was present, told me, there never was a more moving interview. After a long pause of silent sorrow, the old gentleman charged his son not to involve himself in any straits on his account, but leave him to suffer the effects of his own imprudence.

"I know," continued he, "the happiness of your "life depends on your marriage with the gentle "Lemira, which will be entirely frustrated by your "being concerned in this affair; nor is your whole "fortune sufficient to disengage me from this con-"finement; but Death will soon bring me a full "discharge from a perplexity into which my too "great credulity, and ill-placed compassion, has "betrayed me; yet this and any thing I can endure

" with fortitude, rather than you shall ruin your " own fortune to extricate mine. Pray leave me," said he, " the concern your looks discover is at " present my heaviest affliction."

The sorrowful youth immediately withdrew; and, sending for all the creditors, found that his whole stock, except what was at sea, added to his father's, would hardly do justice to many honest trader's demands, who must be ruined, with their families, without satisfaction; but to whatever exigence he reduced himself, he resolved to discharge his father, which he soon accomplished by a handsome composition.

Valerius's whole dependence was now on the return of the Turkey fleet, where he had considerable effects; but my father was so angry with him for engaging in his father's affairs, that he forbid me ever seeing or thinking any more of him as a lover. Nor did the torrent of his adversity stop here; for within a few days he had intelligence that two ships belonging to him, richly laden, were, in their return, taken by a Spanish pirate.

I was soon informed of this disaster, and writ immediately to Valerius, in the softest language that a passion like mine could dictate; and, (to conceal nothing from you,) I offered to marry him, and put into his possession that part of my fortune which was left by my aunt entirely in my own power. If you should condemn this romantic in-

stance of affection in me, you will certainly approve the conduct of my young philosopher, who, in this crisis of love and adversity, could act with such composure and true greatness of mind, as you will find expressed in the following letter:

" *To* LEMIRA.

" THE distress I am in, too generous Lemira, has " not reduced me to such an abject disposition as, " by accepting the offer you make me of your for- " tune, to betray you into a state of necessity and " contempt on so low a motive as my own interest. " Far be such a selfish view for ever from my " soul! You wrong me, and your own charms, " if you think the passion they have inspired will " suffer me to act any thing unbecoming its gran- " deur. However my fortunes are sunk, my mind " kesps its native elevation, and is untainted with " any selfish or mercenary design. If I loved you " less, I might, perhaps, (abstracted from your " happiness,) pursue my own, and leave you at " leisure to repent your rashness, and curse the " mercenary wretch that was the instrument of " your ruin.

" Your father has forbid your marrying me on " the forfeiture of his blessing; and shall I rob " you of that, and bring the weight of a paternal " curse on your head! Shall I seduce you from " the affluence and splendour of Fortune, to share

" in my distresses, and struggle with the inconve-
" niencies of low life! Could I see you reduced to
" want and obscurity, in hopes it might be a so-
" lace to my own misery, and lessen my lot of hu-
" man cares! No, let me stand acquitted by hea-
" ven and earth of such baseness as this.

" Will you call this coldness? will you term it
" indifference, and not rather the utmost effort of
" affection, the triumph of a generous passion?
" Oh, Lemira, you are dearer to me than life! next
" to Heaven I love you. In parting with you I
" abandon every earthly joy; I quit my whole
" share of human happiness, and must sink into
" the last dejection, if Religion did not support
" me with its divine consolations.

" And here the morning seems to break, a gleam
" of peace salutes me, some presaging hopes of a
" prosperous catastrophe smile through the dark-
" ness; nothing is impossible to an almighty
" Power; there are virtues to which Heaven has
" annexed promises of a present retribution. It
" was in the practice of the great duties of mor-
" ality I fell into this extremity; and here the di-
" vine Veracity has engaged itself to secure me;
" all events are in the hands of the Sovereign Dis-
" poser; his will makes nature and necessity;
" no obstacle puts a stand to his designs, nor
" obstructs the course of Providence; perpe-
" tual beneficence has not diminished his stores,

"nor are the springs of his mercy exhausted. I "must own I have received some consolation from "the verses inclosed, which were written by one "of my friends in very distressed circumstances. "I must bid you an unwilling adieu.

Your's, &c.

"VALERIUS."

On the DIVINE VERACITY.

BE hush'd, my Griefs, 'tis his almighty will,
That rules the storms, and bids you all be sill;
Be calm, ye Tempests, vanish ev'ry care,
While with triumphant faith my soul draws near
To God in all the confidence of pray'r.
He has not bid me seek his face in vain,
Talk to the winds, or to the waves complain;
He hears the callow ravens from their nest,
By him their eager cravings are redress'd;
Young lions through the desert roar their wants;
He marks them, and the wild petition grants;
The gaping furrows thirst, nor thirst in vain
(Parch'd by the noon-day sun,) for timely rain;
With silent suits the fair declining flow'rs
Request and gain the kind refreshing showers.
And will the Almighty Father turn away,
Nor hear his darling offspring when they pray?
No breach of faithfulness his honour stains,
With day and night his word unchang'd remains;
The various ordinances of the sky
Stand forth his glorious witnesses on high;
Summer and winter, autumn and the spring,
For him, by turns, their attestations bring;
Unblemish'd his great league with Nature stands,
And full reliance on his truth demands;

Nothing that breathes a second deluge fears,
When in the clouds the radiant bow appears.
Can the most High, like man, at random speak,
Forfeit his honour, and his promise break?
Does he that falsely swears his vengeance claim?
And shall he stain his own tremendous name?
The earth, the heav'ns, were witness when he swore
By his great Self; what would thy fears have more?
And had a greater than himself been found,
That greater had the high engagement bound.
Shall fleeting winds th' Almighty's words disperse,
Or breathing dust his solemn oath reverse?
Can he, like man, unconstant man, repent?
Shall any chance, or unforeseen event,
Start up, his settled purpose to prevent?
Or can he fail in the expected hour,
A stranger to his own extent of power?
What profit can a worm his Maker bring,
That he should flatter such a worthless thing?
Why should he condescend to mind my tears,
Or calm with soft deluding words and fears?
Can he (of perfect happiness possess'd)
Deride the woes that human life molest,
Or mock the hopes that on his goodness rest?
Nature may change her course, Confusion reign,
And men expect the rising sun in vain;
Bnt should th' eternal truth and promise fail,
Infernal night and horror must prevail;
The thrones of light would shake, th' angelic pow'rs,
Would stop their harps amidst the blissful bow'rs.
No more the soft, the sweet melodious strain,
Would gently glide along the happy plain;
No more would tuneful hallelujahs rise.
And shouts triumphant fill the sounding skies:
Each heav'nly countenance a sullen air
Of grief and anxious diffidence would wear.

The golden palaces, the splendid seats,
The flow'ry mansions, and these soft retreats,
The rosy shades, and sweet delicious streams,
Would disappear like transitory dreams.
Angels themselves their brightest hopes recline
On nothing more unchangeable than mine.
Am I deceiv'd? what can their charter be?
Fair seraphim may be deceiv'd like me;
If Goodness and Veracity divine
Can fail, their heav'n's an airy dream like mine.
But, oh! I dare the glorious venture make,
And lay my soul and future life at stake;
Be earth, be heaven, at desp'rate hazard lost,
If here my faith should prove an empty boast!
Whate'er your arts, ye pow'rs of hell suggest,
The truth of God undaunted I attest:
Produce your annals with insulting rage,
Bring out your records, show the dreadful page,
One instance where th' Almighty broke his word,
Since first the race of men his name ador'd;
In gloomy characters point out the hour,
Exert your malice, summon all your pow'r;
With rites infernal all your pomp display,
And mark with horror the tremenduous day;
Confus'd, you search your dreadful rolls in vain,
Th' eternal honour shines without a stain,
Unblemish'd shines in men and angels' view;
Just are thy ways, thou King of Saints, and true!

I inclosed this letter, my dear brother, to show you with what equality of mind the generous youth behaves himself in this distress. I beg you would hasten your return to England, in compassion to

Your unhappy friend and sister,

LEMIRA.

LETTER XIV.

To HERMINIUS.

I HAVE just reason to fear my essay on this noble subject will not answer your expectations; with whatever fluency I could express myself when inspired by mortal beauty, the pomp of language fails me. Here the boldest figures lose their emphasis, and grow insipid on this superior theme.

DIVINE LOVE.

FOR thee, fond LOVE, my darling theme,
My lute has oft been strung;
Thy pow'r, by ev'ry answ'ring stream,
In gentle notes I sung:
Laurinda taught my Muse her art,
And fill'd with tender fires my heart:
She taught me how to paint thy beauteous face,
Thy charming form, and ev'ry moving grace.

But who shall guide the darling strain,
CELESTIAL LOVE! that aims at thee,
Thou fairest offspring of the Deity?
I call the pow'rs of Harmony in vain,
In vain the softest accents I employ;
The brightest metaphors in vain I chuse,
With all the melting language lovers use,
To tell their pain, or speak their rising joy.
All the heights of pure desire,
Holy love, and heav'nly fire,
At once my panting breast inspire:
Such ardour smiling martyrs know,
When, defying ev'ry foe,
In triumph on to death they go.

Tell me, thou, for whom I prove
All the fierce extremes of Love,
How thy charms, so far retir'd
From mortal sense, have all my bosom fir'd:
Greatness and fame, beauty and harmony,
Are all but empty names, compar'd to thee:
Be thou but mine,
The whole creation I at once resign.

Vanish thou earth, and ev'ry gaudy scene
Of hill and dale, or grove, or flow'ry field,
When by the Spring adorn'd with cheerful green:
Vanish, whate'er delights thou else canst yield.
Thou Sun, be dark; and let eternal night
Conceal thy vital splendour from my sight.
Thou Moon, and ev'ry gay ethereal fire,
Burn out your golden store;
I shall be bless'd when all your lights expire,
And earth, and sea, and skies, shall be no more!

Place me where infernal Night
And endless Horror reign;
Where, banish'd far from hope and light,
Unhappy ghosts complain:
Ev'n there, one gentle smile of thine
Th' eternal gloom would chace;
Immortal day would on me shine,
And pleasure fill the place.

Should Heav'n surround me with full tides of joy,
And open all its glories to my sight,
One frown of thine would all that heav'n destroy,
And wither my delight;
One frown of thine th' immortal groves would blast,
And darkness o'er the blissful regions cast.

You that sing in happy bow'rs,
And in unmingled pleasures pass the hours,

That know the height of heav'nly bliss,
Come, play me some soft air of Paradise;
Gently strike your sweetest strings,
And touch my soul on all its tender springs,
While, rising on the Music's downy wings,
I'll bid at once mortality adieu,
And love and paint the sacred flame like you.

But, my dear Herminius, the present performance will convince you that I have not yet learned the strains of immortality; and perhaps you will not think it necessary for me to make an apology for not being an angel: however, If I can contribute to your entertainment as a mere mortal, you may command

Your most humble servant,

EVANDER.

LETTER XV.

To ALONZO.

You have spent so many happy hours at the Earl of ——'s fine seat in the country that it is unnecessary to describe those beautiful scenes with which you are so well acquainted: here I have passed a great part of the summer season in a manner suited to my contemplative humour. Having no taste for country diversions, or any kind of rural sports, my pleasures were confined to the

charming shades and gardens with which the house is surrounded.

Here I enjoyed an unmolested tranquillity, till a fit of curosity led me to make an excursion into the wide campaign that opened before me from the borders of the park.

If I begin with the rosy dawn, you will pardon my romantic style in relating the surprising adventure: but, without telling a lie, the morning was yet dusky, the balmy dew and fragrant gales perfumed the air with their untainted sweets; while, with thoughts free as the airy songsters that warble on the branches, I wandered from rising hills to winding vales, through flowery lawns to leafy woods, till I found myself under the shade of a venerable row of elms; which put me in mind of Sir Roger de Coverley's rookery; the aged trees shot their heads so high, that, to one who passed under them, the crows and rooks which rested on their tops seemed to be cawing in another region. I was delighted with the noise, while, with the Spectator, I considered it as a kind of natural prayer to that Being who supplies the wants of his whole creation. My thoughts were inspired with a pleasing gratitude to the beneficent Father of the universe, till the sequel of my devotion was interrupted by the sight of a beautiful girl, about four or five years old, sitting on the grafs, with a basket of flowers on her lap, which she was stick-

ing in the snowy fleece of a little lamb that stood tamely by her.

I began to hope it was one of the fairy race, or some pretty phantom that haunted the grove; for the adjacent house, belonging to this reverend avenue looked more like a dormitory for the dead than an habitation for the living; every thing about it appeared ruinous and dosolate; I could neither hear the voice, nor trace the steps of mortal men in this absolute solitude; nor had I any hopes of knowing into what wild regions I was got, unless the pretty figure sitting on the grass could give some intelligence.

I made my appearance very respectfully; but what was my surprise, in drawing near, to find the air, the complexion, every feature in miniature, of the ungrateful Aurelia, on whom I once so passionately doted? A thousand tormenting ideas rushed into my mind at the sight of this lovely creature, who smiled on me with the most enchanting innocence. While I stood eagerly gazing at her, which was not long, Aurelia herself entered the walk, and confirmed my suspicion that this child was a living proof of her infamy.

It is about six years since she eloped from the public view, regardless of her own illustrious family, or the obligations she was under to the generous Cleone, who treated her with the utmost confidence, and was the last that suspected her

husband's criminal affair with her.—Be my own wrongs forgot, and all the contempt with which she treated whatever proposals honour and a disinterested passion could make.

I found her now an object of pity rather than resentment; the dejection of her mind was visible in her pale haggard looks, and the wretched negligence of her habit. I could hardly persuade myself this was the celebrated thing that once appeared in all public places with such a parade of equipage, and vanity.

She was in the utmost confusion at this interview, till, excusing myself, I told her this intrusion was undesigned, and purely the effect of chance, as I was taking a morning's ramble from the Earl of ——'s, where I had spent some time; and that she might depend on my word not to discover her abode to any one in that family.

By this time she was a little composed, and invited me to rest myself after my walk. I followed her into the house, which looked more like the mansions of Despair than a retreat for a lady of pleasure; an awful silence reigned in every room, through which I made a shift to find my way by a dim twilight that glimmered through some windows of as antique a figure as those of an old abbey. The furniture, I fancy, has not been displaced from times immemorial; it looks more like unwieldy lumber than any thing designed for use

or ornamens: there was nothing of a modern date but a tea-table, and that in ruinous circumstances.

It was now about ten o'clock. Aurelia ordered tea and chocolate to be brought: all her attendance was a fresh-coloured country lass, who withdrew as soon as we had breakfasted.

I was impatient to hear a relation of Aurelia's misfortunes, but durst not ask any question, for fear it would look like insulting her distress; only renewed my excuses for interrupting her privacy.

To which she replied, "That though I was the "last person in the world she should have chose "to be a witness of her infamy, yet she thought "herself happy in having an opportunity to make "some apology for her injustice to me, in refu- "sing those terms of honour I once offered, and "complying with such reproachful conditions as "had made her the most miserable creature on "earth.

"It was my criminal inclination," continued she, "for Cassander, that made me inflexible to "your entreaties, and my father's commands, to "marry you. But whatever wrong this was to "your merit, my guilt, with regard to the gener- "ous Cleone, is of a higher nature; the intrigue I "had with her husband was attended with circum- "stances of the blackest treachery. I had broke "through the tenderest engagements of friendship, "and granted all that my dissolutel over could ask;

" when finding myself with child, to hide my in-
" famy he brought me to this dismal place, an old
" mansion-house belonging to his family, where
" I am cut off from human society, except two
" or three stupid peasants, his tenants, who reside
" in some part of this Gothic structure. It is
" now six years since I have breathed and slept,
" (for I cannot call it living) in this melancholy
" confinement, without hopes of a release, being
" entirely dependent on Cassander's allowance and
" caprice, who but too well knows his own power
" and my folly; which makes him, instead of the
" humble lover, act the imperious tyrant; his vi-
" sits are seldom, his stay short, and I am left
" whole months to languish alone in a detested so-
" litude.

" This child," continued she, weeping, and taking the lovely creature in her arms, " this child, " which might have been my joy, proves my " greatest affliction; should I die, she is imme- " diately abandoned to hardship and necessity; " should I live, it distracts me to think she may " follow my scandalous example. How can I give " her instructions to avoid those vices which my " practice approves? or recommend that virtue, " whose sacred rules I have so openly violated? " And still I love this worthless man. Were I pe- " nitent, could I resolve on a reformation, this " leisure and retirement would be a blessing, an

" advantage, to me; but I am obstinate in guilt,
" while I depair of happiness in this world, or the
" next. Till I came here, my hours were spent
" in frolic and gaiety; a constant series of diver-
" sions shortened the days, and gave wings to the
" jovial hours, which now have leaden feet, and,
" burdened with grief, lag heavily along. No sort
" of reflection gives me joy; whether I look back-
" ward or forward, all is darkness and confusion.
" I am no way qualified for retirement; books are
" my aversion, thinking is my horror; I am weary
" of living, and afraid to die!"

I heard this account with a heart full of compassion, and said what I could to persuade her to break off this criminal commerce with Cassander, and throw herself on the care of Providence and the generosity of her friends: but I had too much value for my own peace, and too great a contempt for a woman of Aurelia's character, to make any particular proposals for her freedom; and bidding her adieu, hasted back to the Earl's without saying one word of my adventure; which I commit to your secrecy, and subscribe myself

Your most humble servant,

POLYDORE.

LETTER XVI.

ROSAMOND *to* HENRY II.

READ o'er these lines, the records of my shame,
If thou canst suffer yet my hateful name;

Clean as this spotless page, till stain'd by me,
Such was my conscience, till seduc'd by thee:
Chaste were my thoughts, and all serene within,
Till mark'd by thee with characters of sin.
Had some successful lover, in the prime
Of equal years, betrayed me to a crime,
Resistless Love had been my best defence,
And gain'd compassion for the soft offence:
But while thy wither'd age had no such charms,
To tempt a blooming virgin to thy arms,
I'm justly thought a prostitute for gold,
A mercenary thing to sordid int'rest sold.

Be curs'd that female fiend, whose practis'd art,
With wanton tales, seduc'd my guiltless heart;
Let her with endless infamy be curs'd;
Of all the agents Hell employs the worst:
Perdition to herself the wretch insur'd,
When she my youthful modesty allur'd:
Oh, fatal day! when, to my virtue's wrong,
I fondly listen'd to her flatt'ring tongue!
But, oh! more fatal moment, when she gain'd
That vile consent which all my virtue stain'd!
Yet Heav'n can tell with what extreme regret
The fury of thy lawless flames I met
For, unexperienc'd in the ways ofsin,
A conscious honour struggled still within.
Oh, could I! but the ill-tim'd wish is vain,
Could I my former innocence regain!
Thy proffer'd kingdom, Henry, were a prize
Which, balanc'd with that wealth, I should despise.
But I no more my sex's pride can boast:
Alas! what has one moment's madness cost!

Not Woodstock's charming bow'rs can ease my grief;
For I must fly myself to find relief.
Oft, while the sun in length'ning shades declines,
And through the waving trees more mildly shines

Alone through all the beauteous walks I rove,
And hope the sweets of solitude to prove;
But, at my sight, each verdant prospect wears
A gloomy view, and every plant appears
To bend its top, o'ercharg'd with dewy tears;
Methinks each painted blossom hangs its head,
Avoids my touch, and withers where I tread.
If angling near a crystal brook I stand,
And with deluding skill the bait command,
The cautious fish, that fly the snare, upbraid
My heedless youth, more easily betray'd.
Amidst the garden, wrought by curious hands,
A noble statue of Diana stands;
Naked she stands, with just proportions grac'd,
And bathing in a silver fountain 's plac'd:
When near the flow'ry borders I advance,
At me she seems to dart an angry glance.
What scenes, alas! can please a guilty mind,
What joy can I in these recesses find,
For lawless and forbidden love design'd?
In some obscure and melancholy cell,
Rather a weeping penitent I'd dwell,
Than here a glorious prostitute remain,
To all my sex's modesty a stain.

This stately lab'rinth, rais'd with vast expense,
Displays my shame in its magnificence:
As through the stately rooms I lately walk'd,
And with my woman of its paintings talk'd,
She spy'd the draught of Tarquin's wanton flame,
And, heedless, ask'd the injur'd beauty's name:
This, I reply'd, is that illustrious Dame—
Renown'd for chastity, I should have said;
But here, a rising blush my face o'erspread;
Confus'd, I stopp'd, and left th' inquiring maid.
Lucretia's story on my life had cast
A black reproach, who yet can live disgrac'd:

I should, like her, with just resentment press'd,
Have plung'd the fatal dagger to my breast.
What specious colours can disguise my sin,
Or still the restless monitor within?
Thy greatness, Henry, but augments my shame,
And adds immortal scandel to my name;
My odious name, which, as the worst disgrace,
The Cliffords cancel from their noble race!
To what propitious refuge shall I run,
The terrors of a guilty mind to shun?
In vain the sun its morning pride displays,
I turn my eyes, and sicken at its rays:
The silver moon and sparkling stars by night
Torment me, too, with their officious light:
The glimm'ring tapers round my chamber plac'd
Across the room fantastic shadows cast;
Of all my dreams the melancholy scene
Presents an injur'd a revengeful Queen.
Last night, when Sleep my heavy eyes had clos'd,
To all her rage, methought, I stood expos'd!
Wild were her looks, a poison'd cup she brought,
And proudly offer'd me the fatal draught;
The destin'd bowl I took with trembling hands,
Compell'd to execute her fierce commands:
This dismal omen aggravates my fears,
Before my fancy still the furious Queen appears.

LETTER XVII.

MARY *Queen of France, to* CHARLES BRANDON *Duke of Suffolk.*

The Princess Mary, Henry the VIII's younger sister, being in love with the Duke of Suffolk, was, for public reasons, married to Lewis XII. of France, who died in six months after. The Queen being again at Liberty, writes the following Epistle to the Duke of Suffolk, her first lover.

[An Imitation of Drayton's Epistle.]

LET these soft lines my kindest thoughts convey,
And tell thee what I suffer by thy stay.
Did seas divide us, this might well excuse
Thy negligence, and my fond heart abuse;
But Calais from the Kentish strand is seen,
A gentle current only rolls between.
Nor needs my Suffolk, like Leander, brave
A threat'ning death in ev'ry breaking wave,
When, guided only by a glimm'ring light,
He cross'd the stormy Hellespont each night:
Tall ships with flying sails, and lab'ring oars,
Attend to land thee on the Gallic shores.
But thou art chang'd! that ardour is expir'd,
Which once thy wishes with impatience fir'd,
When Savoy's blooming Duchess strove in vain
From me the conquest of thy heart to gain:
Invited by great Henry's martial fame,
The haughty princess, with her brother came
To compliment the King for Tournay gain'd;
Where, in a rich pavilion, entertain'd,
Thy noble form th' unguarded fair surpris'd;
Nor were her tender wishes long disguis'd:
Whatever flatt'ry, love, or wanton art
Could do, she practis'd to seduce thy heart.
Great Anthony, by such allurements, gain'd,

For Cleopatra all his glory stain'd:
But thy firm faith no injury receiv'd,
For you were just, or I was well deceiv'd.
Nor were my virgin vows less true to thee,
When young Castile adddress'd the Court for me;
The charms of proffer'd empire I resign'd,
And all that could ambition move, declin'd;
A softer passion had possess'd my mind;
And while unrivall'd in thy breast I reign'd,
My thoughts the lustre of a crown disdain'd.
But, ah! what changes human joys attend!
On airy chance our brightest hopes depend.
Victorious Henry's arms still meet success:
The vanquish'd Gauls at last propose a peace:
By Wolsey's policy their terms succeed,
And both the hostile nations are agreed,
While I the public victim am decreed.
Condemn'd to share the Christian Monarch's bed,
And curs'd with that magnificence I fled.
I know my rank no private choice allow'd,
And what a Princess to her country ow'd.
These splendid maxims should have sway'd my breast,
But love entirely had my soul possess'd.
How oft I wish'd my humble lot had been
Beneath the glorious hazard of a Queen!
That crown'd by rural maids with painted flow'rs,
I rang'd the fields, and slept in verdant bow'rs!
Belov'd of some young swain with Brandon's face,
His voice, his gesture, and his blooming grace!
In all but birth and state resembling thee!
Then unmolested had we liv'd, and free
From those unhappy turns which greatness brings;
While rocks and meadows, shades and purling springs,
The flow'ry valley and the gloomy grove,
Had heard of no superior name to Love.

Such scenes of this inglorious life I drew,
And half believ'd the charming fiction true,
'Till real ills dissolv'd the pleasing dreams;
The groves and vallies fled, the lawns and silver streams,
The gay fantastic paradise I mourn'd,
While courts and factions, crowns and cares return'd.
With sighs I still recall the fatal day,
When no pretence could gain a longer stay,
The lovely Queen my parting sorrow saw,
Nor Henry's presence kept my grief in awe:
No rules of decent custom could controul,
Or hide the wild disorder of my soul;
When shipp'd for France, before the dancing wind
The navy fled, and left my hopes behind.
With weeping eyes I still survey'd the strand,
Where on a rising cliff I saw thee stand;
Nor once from thence my stedfast sight withdrew,
'Till the lov'd object was no more in view.
Farewell, I cry'd, dear charming youth! with thee
Each cheerful prospect vanishes from me.
Loud shouts and triumphs on the Gallic coast
Salute me, but the noisy zeal was lost;
Nor shouts nor triumphs forc'd my least regard,
Thy parting sighs, methought, was all I heard,
But now at Abeville by Lewis met,
I strove the thoughts of Suffolk to forget;
For here my faith was to a monarch vow'd,
And solemn rites my passion disallow'd:
However pure my former flames had been,
Unblemish'd honour made them now a sin.
But scarce my virtue had the conquest gain'd,
And ev'ry wild forbidden wish restrain'd,
When at St Dennis, with imperial state
Invested, on the Gallic throne I sat;
The day with noble tournaments was grac'd,
Your name among the British champions plac'd.

Invited by a guilty thirst of fame,
Without regard to my repose you came.
The lists I saw thee ent'ring with surprise,
And felt the dazzling glances of thine eyes.
Ye sacred Pow'rs, I cry'd, that rule above!
Defend my breast from this perfidious love.
Ye holy Lamps! before whose awful lights
I gave my hand; and ye, religious Rites!
Assist me too; nor let a thought unchaste,
Or guilty wish, my plighted honour blast:
While passion, struggling with my pious fears,
Forc'd from my eyes involuntary tears.
Some tender blossom thus, with leaves enlarg'd,
Declines its head, with midnight dew o'ercharg'd:
The passing breezes shake the gentle flow'r,
And scatter all around a pearly show'r.
From this distracting hour I shunn'd thy sight,
And gain'd the conquest by a prudent flight;
But human turns and sov'reign Destiny,
Have set me now from these engagements free.
The stars, propitious to my virgin love,
My first desires and early vows approve,
While busy politicians urge in vain,
That public reasons should my choice restrain;
That none but York's or Lancaster's high race,
Or great Plantagenet's, I ought to grace.
Nor Suffolk wants a long illustrious line,
And worth, that shall in future records shine;
They own'd thy valour, when thy conqu'ring lance
Carry'd the prize from all the youth of France.
Thy merit Henry's constant favour shows,
And envy only can my choice oppose.
Thy noble presence, wit, and fine address,
The British and the Gallic court confess.
Alencon's shape, and Vendôme's sparkling eye,
Count Paul's gay mein, and Bourbon's majesty,
No longer are admir'd when thou art by.

There nothing wants to justify my flame,
The statesmen grant, but a poor empty name.
And what's the gaudy title of a King?
What sort of bliss can royal grandeur bring?
When thou art absent, what's the court to me,
But tiresome state and dull formality?
This toy, a crown, I would resign to prove
The peaceful joys of innocence and love.

LETTER XVIII.

PENELOPE *to* ULYSSES.

[From OVID.]

DISTRACTED with his stay, yet still the same,
True to her ancient vows, and early flame,
Penelope salutes her absent King:
Oh! would himself at last an answer bring!
Proud Troy is fall'n, our Grecian virgins hate:
Yet not th' unrivall'd riches of her state,
Nor all the glories of her monarch's throne,
Can, for the pains thy absence gives, atone.
Oh! had the waves, that gently wafted o'er
The lustful Phrygian to the Spartan shore,
Plung'd in the deep the guilty load they bore!
Abandon'd then, I should not waste away
In unavailing moans the lazy day;
Or lost to joy, and widow'd of delight,
Curse the dull lagging hours of the more tedious night.
Fruitful of doubts, my love still fear'd for you
Dangers unknown, and greater than the true
I thought all Troy conspir'd against thy head,
And Hector's name, but mention'd, struck me dead.
Trembling, I heard of false Achilles slain,
And wept to find the bold deceit was vain.

Tlepolemus fell by the Lycian spear,
Tlepolemus renew'd my anxious care.
In short at ev'ry Grecian hero's fall,
Through the long war before the fatal wall,
A thrilling coldness ran through every part,
Chill'd up my blood, and shudder'd at my heart,
But my chaste passion mov'd the pitying skies;
My Lord is safe, and Troy in ashes lyes.
With prosp'rous gales the Argive chiefs return,
And to their country gods Barbaric incense burn.
The wives in pious gifts declare their joy,
While their sav'd husbands tell the fate of Troy;
Old men and frighted virgins, fix'd around,
In dumb amzaement dwell upon the sound:
The soldiers in gay feasts their cares compose,
And mark in wine the scenes of ancient woes.
This is Sigæum, here swift Simois flow'd,
There high erect old Priam's palace stood;
Here fierce Pelides urg'd the dreadful war,
There fix'd the bleeding Hector to his car;
There mov'd Ulysses, certain of success,
Greater his conduct nor his courage less.
'Twas Nestor told us all: he told us too
The arts that Dolon and the Thracian slew.
Heedless, and too forgetful as you were,
In you, I'm sure, twas criminal to dare;
When you, but for one faithful friend alone,
Dealt fate to squadrons, and provok'd your own,
How well your wife and infant left behind,
How well your tender passion fill'd your mind!
I fainted as I heard the dreadful tale;
Scarce your success could o'er my fears prevail.
But what's success, what's ruin'd Troy to me,
Or all the savage joys of victory?

If still unbless'd, I sink beneath my pain,
And never must enjoy my Lord again
For other wives destroy'd to me still stands
The wall erected by immortal hands.
Now plenteous harvests grow where Ilium stood,
The soil well fatten'd with the natives blood;
O'er ruin'd palaces that reach'd the skies
Low spires of grass and humble shrubs arise.
Still of the conqu'ror's absence I complain,
Nor know what distant worlds my wand'ring Lord detain.
Ulysses I of ev'ry ship require,
The sailors with repeated questions tire:
Hopeless and half despairing, yet I write;
The cruel Pow'rs that envy my delight
May bring at least my letters to your sight.
To Pylos, ancient Nestor's fruitful reign,
And Sparta's injur'd court, I sent in vain;
For nor from Sparta nor from Pylos came
Aught save wild rumours, and uncertain fame.
Again I wish Troy's lofty tow'rs might rise,
And curse the thoughtless vows that gain'd the skies.
War's hazards then would be my only care,
And I in common with a thousand fear.
Now all the dangers of the land and seas
Are present to my thoughts, and banish ease:
While you, alas! perhaps with pleasure rove,
And faithless nourish a forbidden love;
Take some deluding harlot to your breast,
And in her arms, with lawless transports bless'd,
Make my dull easy constancy your jest.
Ye Pow'rs! avert the thought I cannot bear,
And give my vain suspicions to the air.
Whate'er may be the reasons of thy stay,
Oh! may'st thou never willingly delay!
Me to a second choice my sire invites,
Chides my delays, and urges all his rights.

Still let him urge, my love my faith assures;
I am, I must, I will be, ever yours.
Yet my warm pray'rs the good old monarch move,
He views my tears, and mourns my hapless love,
But a vile train of thoughtless youths proclaim,
With lawless impudence, a saucy flame.
Hither from Zante and Samos they resort,
And revel unmolessed in thy court.
Treasures, the purchase of thy blood, they seize,
Those spoils Eurymachus, Pisander these:
Antinous here, with equal rage possess'd,
There greedy Polybus, a constant guest,
Plunder around—and need I name the rest,
Who in your absence on our vitals prey,
And waste in costly luxury the day?
The beggar Irus, a detested name,
And base Melanthus last, complete thy shame.
'Gainst these insults what force can I employ,
What thy old father, or thy tender boy?
For his dear life a thousand snares are laid,
And certain ruin aim'd at his unguarded head.
Preserve him, Heav'n! and if we ne'er must join,
Yet may he live to close your eyes and mine.
In vain Laertes does his pow'r oppose,
Unfit for war against surrounding foes.
Telemachus will soon to fame aspire,
Now his soft years a parent's aid require.
Oh! thou, our only hope and refuge, come,
Dispel our dangers, and avert our doom:
Form the young hero in the arts of war,
To rival thee, but with more caution dare.
Haste, and relieve your sire, with years oppress'd:
Once more he longs to clasp you in his breast,
Then shake off tedious life, and sink to rest.
Oh! haste to me!—A little longer stay
Will ev'ry grace, each fancy'd charm, decay:

Increasing cares, and Time's resistless rage,
Will waste my bloom, and wither it to age;
Yet at thy sight wild joys and sprightly love
Shall dying youth recall, and ev'ry charm improve.

SIX LETTERS

FROM

LAURA TO AURELIA.

LETTER I.

From LAURA, *giving an account of her brother's criminal amour, and her own passion for the handsome hermit.*

COULD your importunity have prevailed with my brother to have left me in London, you had been free from the vexation that I shall certainly give you, by making you the confidant of all my country adventures; and I hope you will relieve my chagrin, by telling me what the dear bewitching, busy world is doing, while I am idly sauntering away my time in rural shades. How happy are you, my dear Aurelia! how I envy you the enjoyment of dust, of crowds, and noise, with all the polite hurry of the *beau monde!*

My brother brought me hither to see a country-seat he has lately purchased: he would fain per-

suade me it is finely situated; but I should think it more finely situated in the Mall, or even in Cheapside, than here. Indeed, I hardly know where we are, only that it is at a dreadful distance from the theatre royal in Drury-Lane, from the opera, from the masquerade, and every thing in this world that is worth living for.

I can scarce tell you whither to direct your letters; we are certainly at the ends of the earth, on the borders of the continent, the limits of the habitable globe, under the polar star, among wild people and savages. I thought we should never have come to the end of our pilgrimage; nor could I forbear asking my brother if we were to travel by dry land to the Antipodes; not a mile but seemed ten that carried me from London, the centre of all my joys.

The country is my aversion; I hate trees and hedges, steep hills, and silent vallies: the satirist may laugh, but to me,

> Green fields, and shady groves, and crystal springs,
> And larks, and nightingales, are odious things.

I had rather hear London cries, with the rattle of coaches, than sit listening to the melancholy murmur of purling brooks, or all the wild music of the woods; the smell of violets gives me the hysterics; fresh air murders me; my constitution is not robust enough to bear it; the cooling zephyrs

will fan me into a catarrh if I stay here much longer.

If these are the seats of the Muses, let them unenvied enjoy their glittering whimsies, and converse with the visionary beings of their own forming, I have no fancy for Dryades and Fairies, nor the least prejudice to human society; a mere earthly beau, with an embroidered coat, suits my taste better than an aereal lover with his shining tresses and rainbow wings.

The sober twilight, which has employed so many soft descriptions, is with me a very dull period; nor does the moon, (on which the poets dote) with all her starry train, delight me half so much as an assembly-room illuminated with wax candles; this is what I should prefer to the glaring sun in its meridian splendour. Day-light makes me sick; it has something in it so common and vulgar, that it seems fitter for peasants to make hay in, or country lasses to spin by than for the use of people of distinction.

You pity me, I know, dear Aurelia, in this deplorable state; the whole creation is a blank to me, it is all joyless and desolate; in whatever gay images the Muses have dressed these rustic abodes, I have not penetration enough to discover them; not the flowery field nor spangled sky, the rosy morn or balmy evening, can recreate my thoughts; I am neither a religious nor poetical enthusiast, and with-

out either of these qualifications what should I do in silent retreats and pensive shades?

I find myself little at ease in this absence of the noisy diversions of the town; it is hard for me to keep up my spirits in leisure and retirement; it makes me anxiously inquisitive what will become of me when my breath flies away. Death, that ghastly phantom, perpetually intrudes on my solitude, and, in some doleful knell from a neighbouring steeple, often calls upon me to ruminate on coffins and funerals, graves, and gloomy sepulchres: these dismal subjects put me in the vapours, and make me start at my own shadow; nor have I acquired any degree of fortitude by turning Freethinker, and unlearning

All that the nurse and all the priest have taught.

Pope.

You have been too often of our party not to know my brother is a very infidel; he has a sort of vanity in making me a proselyte, and freeing my mind from those prejudices (as he calls them) and superstitious notions which govern a great part of the world; but as he finds me a little unwilling to resign my immortality, he has furnished me with a system of transmigration, and the eternal wandering of the soul from one species of being to another.

However, I do not find myself a gainer by renouncing my creed, which allowed me to hope,

that after the period of this mortal life I might be an angel, or at least equal to those bright essences.

But by this fantastic scheme, to which my brother is making me a convert, my pretensions are sunk; the utmost I can expect, when I have shifted my present existence, is to grin in a monkey, or look demure in a broad-faced owl, or to sit a chattering magpye in a bush; it is a chance among which of the animal race I am to be numbered, whether I shall mount the air with the winged inhabitants, or crawl on the earth among my brother reptiles, or graze in the meadows with the horned tribe. Indeed I have no great stomach to grass or hay, and as little inclination to sleep in a den, or stretch my hairy bulk on the dewy plain; but it is yet uncertain whether I am to stalk, or fly, or swim: I am still at a loss which of these various clans to greet as my next kindred.

However, I am better pleased with being what I am than any thing else. I had rather be a celebrated toast, fluttering at a ball among beaus and pretty fellows, than the most gaudy butterfly hovering with painted wings over a bed of tulips. If this should be my ensuing fate, it will be a mortifying descent from a goddess to an insect.

And really there is something so gloomy and uncomfortable in these prospects of futurity, that if I consider them much longer I shall turn Christian again, in defiance of my brother, and a learned unbeliever his companion, who are perpetually ri-

diculing my concern about a visionary hereafter, as they term it.

Indeed, this would be the least of my cares were I not extremely at leisure; but as I am, it is impossible for me to avoid being solicitous what fate attends me when I resign this transitory life: for I must certainly die: I am mortal beyond contradiction: this truth sits heavy on my soul; there is no flying its evidence, nor does this place afford any amusement to divert the gloomy reflection; If I should turn devotee, you would think it a more wonderful metamorphosis than any I have named: but in all changes I am constantly

Your's, &c.

LAURA.

P. S. I have a secret to tell you concerning my brother, which you shall know in my next letter; for I am as impatient to discover it as you can be to hear it.

LETTER II.

To AURELIA.

I HAVE too much confidence in my dear Aurelia to conceal any thing from her; nor can it be any injury to my brother to trust you with his character, and know him to be as great a libertine in his practise as his principles.

But in whatever freedoms he has indulged himself, I must own he has always endeavoured to give me a just sense of honour, and the decorum due to my sex: while he has taken pains to free me from the restraints of religion, he has left nothing unsaid on other motives that might raise in me the tenderest concern for a clear reputation: which made me the more resent his scandalous conduct, when I found he had a mistress in his house, whom he had sent hither two or three days before we came. I knew not what to do, nor how to behave myself in this exigence, 'till I found she was rather an object of compassion than reproach, and that she came hither not to indulge an infamous amour, but to shelter herself from want and the resentment of her relations.

She told me the story of her misfortune as well as the distress and confusion she was in would permit; and, asking me a thousand pardons, ingenuously owned she had engaged my brother to bring me with him or not to follow her.

I found her education had been strictly modest, and that she was unacquainted with the vicious part of the world. She is hardly fifteen, her name is Charlotte, the only child of a noted citizen, who was utterly ruined in his affairs by a crafty Jew; from the height of credit the unhappy man found himself sunk into circumstances of disgrace and indigence.

This was a melancholy turn to Charlotte, just in the vanity of youthful expectations, to find herself from the affluence of fortune, so suddenly reduced to poverty and contempt. My brother (whom she had sometimes seen with her father, but knew nothing of his character) took this unfortunate crisis to tempt her, with rich presents and fair promises, to leave her friends and retire to some private lodgings he had got for her.

In this distraction of affairs, her father being under an arrest, and all his effects seized, she was surprised into a compliance with my brother's proposal; nor did he give her time to reflect or consult any of her relations, who soon got intelligence of this dishonour, and sent her a severe injunction to see their faces no more.

This cruel message, with the sad tidings of her mother's death that followed, and the full evidence that she was deluded by my brother with feigned promises of marriage, had almost proved fatal to her life; nor could any arguments allay her sorrow, 'till her distressed lover engaged never to ask any future favour of her but what the nicest virtue may grant. On this condition, she consented to go to his new seat in the country; for indeed she has no other refuge. He has kept his promise; she lodges in my apartment, and is treated by him with as much decency as if she was his sister.

I never thought such a libertine would turn Pla-

tonic; it is an unusual refinement, and, I believe, the first gallantry of this kind he ever practised; but he has an esteem, a tenderness, for her, of which, by his dissolute manners, I always fancied him incapable.

Her behaviour is really modest; nor was there ever a more natural impression of truth and innocence than appears in her face: her too credulous temper and unexperienced years have betrayed her into this state of shame and misery; of which, though too late, she seems exquisitely sensible. Since I began this letter she came into my closet, and, with a flood of tears, begged me to contrive some way to free her from this dangerous place.

"But whither," she said, "can I fly? My friends "will never receive me; nor have I the confidence "to meet their reproaches; my crime has sent a "tender mother weeping to her grave; it loads "my father's hoary head with a heavier weight of "sorrow than all his other misfortunes. Love "was not my excuse, I am yet a stranger to that "passion; it was a cowardice, it was fear of po-"verty, a criminal distrust of celestial Providence. "I should have begged, I should have starved, ra-"ther than have parted with my innocence on "such mercenary terms. However sincere my "repentance is, it can signify nothing with regard "to the world; the scandal will never be oblite-"rated: I must either face the public contempt,

"or waste my days in a joyless obscurity. Put "my condition in the best light. Would this "false man, as he promised, marry me, what op- "probrious language, what terms of infamy, must "I expect, in his intervals of chagrin! Besides "this, the impiety of his conversation terrifies me, "while I hear him make a jest of those sacred sub- "jects for which I have been taught the highest "veneration. I should live happier with a wild "American."

I made her no reply; the reasoning was too just to admit a contradiction; but this melancholy instance makes me more than ever resolved not to surrender, nor even capitulate, on any other terms but those of a lawful English wife. Adieu.

LAURA.

LETTER III.

To AURELIA.

WHAT mutable things we are! You will be surprised to hear I am grown fond of the country, and have acquired a relish for its harmless delights. I can talk to an echo, or listen with great attention to a purling stream. I am in a fair way to make garlands, invoke the Muses, and write pastorals. Since you heard last from me I have met with an agreeable adventure, that has given a sort of romantic turn to my imagination.

As I was taking my constant diversion of riding on the downs, the evening being exceeding pleasant, I wandered some miles beyond my usual limits, 'till I came in sight of a venerable pile of building, which could be distinguished from a church by nothing but the want of a steeple; every thing about it had an air of grandeur and antiquity. At some distance from the house there was a thick wood, with several fine walks cut through it.

I had a great inclination to ramble in those agreeable shades; and alighting, ordered my footman to wait at the place where I left him. It was not long before I came to the centre of the forest, in which was a large grass-plat of a circular figure, with a double row of high elmes growing in the same form round it: in the middle of the green was a little mount, that, by easy steps of turf, had a winding ascent to the top, where stood an arbour of jessamine, woodbine, and roses, twisted together with a sort of elegant disorder; the gaudy blossoms pleased the sight, while their mingled sweets perfumed the ambient air. On the lower branches of the circling elms hung several gilt cages, with a variety of singing birds in them, which were now chanting their evening songs, while a musical flagelet, in clear and shrill responses, answered from the delicious arbour.

I began to think there were indeed such things

as enchanted forests, and vocal groves, or that the great Spirit of Nature was solacing itself in those innocent abodes; however, female curiosity led me on 'till I came to the charming bower, where I found a well-dressed beautiful youth, of about seventeen, sitting with a flagelet in his hand: his complexion was a lively brunette that disgraced the lily and the roses; his dark hair fell in large and graceful curls below his neck; nothing could be more elegant than his shape and features; nor was there any meeting the splendour of his eyes without being sensible of every darting glance.

I made some apology for my intrusion, which he answered with an easy natural civility; nor could I perceive that my presence gave him the least surprise or confusion. He received me with perfect composure, nor seemed to have any manner of curiosity to know whence I came, or whither I was going; nor (to my great mortification) did he so much as ask whether I was a mortal or a goddess.

It gave me some uneasiness, I confess, to find myself no more an object of surprise to one who, perhaps, had never seen any thing so fine in his life; for I was in a very rich habit, blazing with scarlet and gold. You cannot imagine how it humbled my vanity to observe with what indolence and tranquillity the young Insensible looked at me; and the more because he did not seem to want wit

or politeness. I was extremely vexed that, at three-and-twenty, he should treat me with as much indifference and respect as if I had been his great-grandmother.

This sedateness gave me a curiosity to pry into his studies; for I saw two books ly near the place where he sat. When I opened them, I found one was, *A Discourse of the Government of the Passions*, the other, *A Treatise of the Immortality of the Soul.* I had nothing to say on those grave subjects; but after some formal discourse of the fine situation of the place, I took my leave of it, the young philosopher attending me to the limits of the wood, where I left my servant, and there we parted, without any seeming reluctance on either side.

But I own I had a restless curiosity to know the history of this lovely youth, and to whom the house belonged; nor was it long before I received satisfaction from a clergyman that was riding the same road with me. He said, "The mansion was Sir "Harry Lizzard's, a man of merit, and well ac-"quainted with the world, at which he was now "unreasonably disgusted, and grown solitary, on "the account of the death of his eldest son, to "whom he had given a very liberal education, and, "with a generous allowance, sent him into Italy, "where his time was spent in the most dissolute "manner; till, being unhappily engaged with a "lewd woman, in a fit of jealousy he shot himself

" through the head. This tragical event made " Sir Harry resolve to give his younger son a quite " different education. Indeed his character is en- " tirely the reverse of his elder brother's; he is " remarkable for his early piety and great proficiency in all sorts of learning, having a very polite " and ingenious person for his tutor: but Philo- " cles, that is the young gentleman's name, has " too great an allay of gravity for his early years, " and is of so retired a tempter that he is known " by the title of *The handsome hermit*, as he is in- " deed very handsome."

Here the clergyman left me overjoyed with this intelligence. As soon as I got home I related my adventure to Charlotte, who gave me but little attention; being, as I told you, in the utmost anxiety at the manner of life to which she was confined. I am,

Dear AURELIA,

most sincerely your's, &c.

LAURA.

LETTER IV.

To AURELIA.

SINCE you received my last letter I have taken another ramble in Sir Harry Lizzard's forest: my brother knows nothing of this adventure, and the first afternoon that I found him engaged I persuad-

ed Charlotte to go with me, who was glad of any pretence to fly from her own gallant, though she expressed but little curiosity to see mine.

At the entrance of the grove we left the servants to wait with our horses till we returned. In my first visit I perceived, by Philocles' discourse, that when the evening was fair he constantly spent it in the charming bower, where we now found him reading Dr Young's *True Estimate of Human Life* with such attention he did not immediately see us, and seemed surprised at the encounter.

It diverted me to find his philosophy discomposed; I began to flatter myself it was the effect of my charms: the hopes of such a conquest delighted me more than all my past victories: it gave a sudden vivacity to my thoughts; and resolving, by my wit, to secure the conquest of my eyes, I began, with great gaiety, to rally him on his recluse manner of life, and loosing his gayest hours in a joyless solitude.

By this time the young Stoic had assumed his natural superiority; and, instead of replying, as I expected, in a gallant and modish strain, he talked to me of the satisfactions of virtue, the tranquility of the mind in the rectitude of its passions; themes which, from another person, would have composed me better than a dose of laudanum: but here

" ———————The grave rebuke,
" Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
" Invincible ——"

Like the fallen angel in Milton,

" ———————Abaſh'd I ſtood,
" And felt how awful Goodneſs is, and ſaw
" Virtue how lovely in her native ſhape!"

The glory that darted from his eyes, the agreeable accent, the moving eloquence, that flowed from those rosy lips, commanded my whole attention; had he preached a sermon I could patiently have listened to the blooming orator

" ———————From morn to noon,
" From noon to dewy eve, a Summer's day." *Milton.*

And yet I could not forbear sometimes laughing at his gravity, and begging he would put himself into holy orders; but he was not to be rallied out of his sobriety, nor could I possibly draw from him that flattery with which till now I had been addressed; he seemed rather to have an inclination to humble my vanity.

Charlotte the whole time sat in a pensive silence, while the tears, which she strove to conceal, would sometimes drop from her eyes. Philocles, in every pause of conversation, surveyed her with looks that expressed great humanity; but I was in no disposition to be jealous of any thing I looked on so inferior to myself.

However, my concern to conceal this affair from my brother made me break off the conversation a

little abruptly, that we might be at home at the usual hour. As soon as ever we were got alone, I asked Charlotte how she liked the handsome hermit?—"Oh," said she, with a tender emotion, "that I had never seen him! Till now I was not "sensible of the injury this barbarian your brother had done me; he has cut me off from all "the lawful joys of life, from the pleasure of a "reciprocal affection for a man of worth and virtue: with my innocence I lost a right to that "happiness. What! am I a prostitute! a kept "mistress! your brother's —! O infamy! your "brother's wh—e!"

"If you had not been that," said I, "Charlotte, "you had been a beggar."

"Oh envied title!" she replied, "O glorious Poverty! thou hast been the choice of saints and "heroes; virtue has made thee her sanctuary, her "peaceful retreat. I could have fed on wholesome "vegetables, quenched my thirst at some crystal "brook, indulged my harmless slumbers on the "verdant turf, undisturbed with guilty fears. Pardon me," said she, recollecting herself, "these "passionate sallies; I find myself more than ever "undone, condemned to waste my hours in sullen "obscurity; in the pride of life, the bloom of soft "desires, to languish in solitary despair! My conscience will not suffer me to gratify an unlawful passion; nor should any advantage (were my

" guilt a secret) persuade me to impose on a man " of worth. I have been true, even to this rake " that has undone me, and frustrated all my hopes " of a lawful happiness."

" That is, my brother has spoiled your marriage," said I: " But, dear Charlotte, why should that " though. afflict you, who intend to pass your fu- " ture time in penitence and retirement? Has the " handsome hermit altered your pious resolutions?"

" No," she replied; " he has rather confirmed " them. Never had the cause of virtue a more re- " sistless advocate; methinks I see the beauty that " lightened in his face; I hear the charming accent " still; I felt the energy of his arguments; my soul " gave its full assent to the celestial dictates. I " wondered you could so often interrupt the grace- " ful orator with your ill-timed raillery; I could " have listened to his lecture of morality till the mid- " night dews had fallen, 'till all the stars had set."

" Dear Charlotte" said I, " forgive this interrup- " tion; I find you are in love. My intention is " entirely frustrated of having your picture drawn " as the Fair Penitent, with a lamp and prayer- " book before you; I perceive you design yet to " converse among sinful mortals. Will you go with " me to-morrow to hear another lecture from the " charming divine?"

" Rather," she replied, " let me retire to the si- " lent grave to conceal my infamy. I would not

" deceive him with an air of innocence, while I am " conscious of my own dishonour. I know my- " self; this is the crisis of my misery; nothing can " obliterate this secret sense of shame; I may re- " tire from the public view, as it is my full resolu- " tion; but what is a resolution at sixteen? With- " out peculiar assistance from heaven I shall never " conquer the dictates of Love and Nature; in this " perplexity I must either marry some worthless " wretch that knows my infamy, or deceive some " man of merit to whom it is a secret."

Here she burst into a flood of tears, entreating me to write to an uncle she had to receive her into his favour, and let her live privately in his family. This I promised; nor despair of prevailing. My concern for her makes me forget it is time to subscribe myself

Your humble servant,

LAURA.

LETTER V.

To the same.

CHARLOTTE, to her great satisfaction, has this morning left us, and is gone to her uncle, who was easily persuaded to receive her, after he was assured of the sincerity of her penitence. But I found it a harder task to prevail with my brother to resign the idol of his affections; though he lost

nothing by her absense but the pleasure of gazing on her.

I am in pain till you know the sequel of my adventure with Philocles, who, since I writ last, has several times, by appointment, met me in the delicious bower; but still, to my great vexation, he appeared insensible of any tender impression. I could discern nothing in his conversation but a pious design to convert me to Christianity, and convince me of the folly of the new scheme to which my brother had made me a proselyte.

But the last time we met I observed a soft confusion in his looks, 'till after a long pause, (which I had no mind to interrupt.) "I am going," said he, "to set myself in a very ridiculous light to one of your character: but I am content to pass "for an enthusiast 'till the event convinces you of "the truth of what I shall relate.

"If a domestic tradition may be credited, there "has no person died out of our family but what "has had a warning of their approaching fate, by "hearing music passing through the house in the "dead silence of the night, which is heard by none "but the person concerned: my mother and sister "both foretold their own death from this presage. "I see you smile," continued Philocles; "but I "have had the same warning, and am superstitious enough to credit it. Last night some trifling disorder kept me waking; my thoughts,

" however, were placid and serene; some verses " I had heard my sister repeat in her last sickness " came fresh into my memory:

" While Night in solem triumph reigns,
" Ascend, my soul, the heav'nly plains;
" Thy flight to those gay regions take;
" Angels and Gods are still awake.
" The smiling stars will light thy way
" To the gladsome realms of day.
" While drowsy men, with idle themes,
" Fantastic joys, and airy dreams,
" Are entertain'd, do thou converse
" With Heav'n, and heav'nly strains rehearse;
" Visit the peaceful climes above,
" And through the fields of pleasure rove;
" Forget the scenes of care and strife,
" And walk among the trees of life.
" Taste the rich fruits of Paradise,
" And bathe in flowing streams of bliss:
" Solac'd in those eternal springs,
" Lose every thought of mortal things.

" Just as I had repeated these verses, I was se- " renaded by an invisible musician, with the sweet- " est strains that ever delighted mortal ears: the " harmonious echo seemed to pass from room to " room 'till it came into my chamber; where, af- " ter a short space, it sunk away in a gentle ca- " dence.

" I knew my obsequies were now sung, and " heard that fatal summons without surprise: death " was a theme familiar to my thoughts, as I nei-

" ther expected or desired to reach the decline of " life."

I listened to this story as to a fairy tale, or a sort of waking dream: as gravely as he told it I could not forbear laughing.

" This, Madam," said he, " is what I expect- " ed; but it will not make me less serious on a " subject of such importance. You have often " rallied me on a manner of life so unsuitable to " my years; perhaps it may be more the effect " of reason than inclination. My brother's tragi- " cal end convinced me of the fatal effects of love, " and made me resolve never to admit that dis- " tracting passion to my breasr: but, whatever " opposition I have made, my heart has not been " insensible of your charms, nor with all my phi- " losophy sufficiently guarded against the allure- " ments of love and soft desire: even now, when " I find myself disengaged from every other care, " I have the utmost solicitude for your happiness; " I am distressed to leave you in this state of in- " fidelity; for this is the last interview we shall " have, unless I am permitted to make you a vi- " sit from the immortal regions, in order to con- " vince you that the hopes of Christianity are no " delusion."

" This proposal," said I, " charms me; there " would be no resisting such evidence. I hope you " will prove a ghost of honour, and not fail the

" assignation, which on my side shall be punctual-
" ly kept, on condition you appear in open day-
" light, and dressed in your celestial finery: with
" these circumstances, I may venture to promise
" you neither to run away nor fall into fits.
" The place of your reception (though not perhaps
" suitable to your future dignity) shall be a paint-
" ed alcove, fronting a walk shaded with limes at
" the end of my brother's garden."

" The gaiety," replied Philocles, " with which
" you treat this subject, persuades me you have cou-
" rage enough to be as good as your word; which
" is the last and only favour I have to ask. I must
" now bid you farewell, and in the retirement of
" my closet prepare to make my exit with a forti-
" tude becoming those sacred principles to which
" I have adhered."

Here, with a tender confusion in his looks, he abruptly left the place, and gave me leisure to reflect on the odd conversation that had passed. But as visionary as some part of it appears, I would fain believe the soft confession he made is no fiction, for I find myself excessively in love; but this shall be a secret to the young enthusiast till he has got over this splenetic fit, which, as whimsical as it appears, gives me a secret uneasiness. He has certainly infected me with some religious panics; I have lost my taste for every kind of diversion; company is molesting, and solitude tiresome; self-

reflection distracts me; whether I look forward or baskward, the prospect is all confusion. But I shall expose myself by owning these weaknesses to one of your character. Adieu, &c.

LAURA.

LETTER VI.

To AURELIA.

OH, my Aurelia! I have surprising things to tell you! the lovely Philocles is dead; his presages were too certain. About a week after our last interview, I heard the melancholy tidings, that Sir Harry Lizzard had lost his only son by a sudden death. The charming youth was impatient of mortality, and is gone to converse with his kindred angels.

You will wonder to hear me treat those subjects seriously which I have till now ridiculed; it is a change that I myself can hardly credit. I never imagined my inclinations were so tenderly engaged, nor that any kind of adversity could have made such an alteration on my temper.

After the first emotions of grief were over, I recollected the appointment we had made, but rather wished than believed such an interview possible; however, my mind was prepared for conviction; I began to reason with Cato,

" ——If there's a Pow'r above,
" He must delight in virtue,
" And that which he delights in must be happy.

I found myself now interested in the truths of Christianity; the firm belief of a life everlasting would in this exigence have been my greatest consolation; my hopes and fears prevailed by intervals, and kept me in the most tormenting suspense while I waited for the decisive hour: as soon as it came, without any consternation I attended at the appointed place.

It was a charming retreat, where Art and luxurious Nature displayed their various beauties; the evening was still, the sun, in golden splendour descending to the western skies, glittered through the trees; every thing looked gay, new life and beauty appeared on all the vernal prospect; the plants put on a fresher green, the flowers displayed a brighter hue, and diffufed ambrosial fragrancy; Nature seemed animated with a conscious joy, as gladdened at the reproach of some heavenly Power.

An unusual alacrity inspired my thoughts, and soothed my soul with a secret delight; while a soft melodious sound, rising by just degreee, filled the region round with transporting harmony.

In the height of these agreeable agitations, as the rosy morning breaks from a cloud, the charming Philocles stood apparent before me. There was something in his aspect so serene and beneficent,

such a sweetness and affability, that banished every thought of fear, and filled my breast with divine tranquillity; ineffable pleasure sparkled in his eyes; youth in eternal triumph sat on his brow, and painted his face with a rosy bloom; his temples were circled with a wreath of celestial roses, which were mingled among his flowing hair with a sort of ornamental negligence.

After a short pause, he began with a voice that would have allayed the anguish of death, and charmed the wildest discord into calm attention; every accent breathed celestial love and harmony, while he described the bowers of bliss, the soft recesses and mansions of immortal pleasure.

But it is impossible for me to paint the beautiful ideas, or imitate the emphasis of his language; the powers of Eloquence sat on his tongue, and commanded all the motions of my soul, which, at that blissful period, seemed enlarged in its superior faculties; every word was penetrating and significant, his manner perfectly graceful and transporting. In his descriptions I saw the glories, I felt the joys, of immortality. But, in the midst of my attention to the sparkling orator, I could not help observing that he often cast his eye on the shadow of a dial, which was placed on the top of a little marble pedestal, on which, with a becoming gesture, he leaned with his right hand. I fancied his time was limited; for, at the last glance I saw him

cast on the dial, he vanished, and with him all my joys.

This momentary view of celestial beauty has obscured all earthly glory. Never will the sun disclose a scene of pleasure to my sight; the vanities which lately amused me have lost their charms; my thoughts are fixed on superior objects; a divine and immortal ardour inspires my soul, and determines all its motions. With the evidence I now have of a future existence my notions of happiness are refined and enlarged, my hopes bright and unlimited.

Adieu, my dear Aurelia! I am not without hopes that this relation will have the same effect on your practice as the heavenly vision has on that of,

Madam,

Your most humble servant,

LAURA.

AMORET *to* CORISCA.

FROM the black regions from the mournful plains,
Where Horror in eternal triumph reigns:
From the low caves of Hell, the dens of Night,
Far from the frontiers of celestial Light;
This from the wretched Amoret receive,
And at my cost these dreadful truths believe.
That 'tis no fiction pious men adore,
But there's indeed a just Almighty Pow'r;
That human spirits after death survive,
And to interminable ages live;

That fields of light, and bless'd etherial plains,
Are no conceit of visionary brains:
But there are happy bow'rs and sdades of love,
With pure exhaustless springs of joy above;
Immortal crowns the virtuous to reward,
And glorious triumphs for the just prepar'd.
Nor question the surprising truths I tell,
While I the secrets of the deep reveal:
For Hell is no enthusiastic dream,
No statesman's trick, nor poets fab'lous theme.
No pious fraud or mercenary lie
Of subtle priests, to gain the conscience by;
'Tis all too sadly true which they maintain,
And far beyond whate'er the poets feign,
Of streams of liquid fire, and burning lakes,
Infernal gibbets, and eternal racks,
Gorgons, chimeras, furies, and their snakes!
No mortal can a just conception frame,
Nor find for half the terrors here, a name.
Then shun the flow'ry paths that downward tend;
To Hell they lead, and in damnation end:
Fly from the snares of that enchanting sin,
Whose fatal joys have my perdition been.
Like thee, with all the pride of beauty gay,
In loose delights I lately spent the day;
Like thee accomplish'd, and like thee admir'd,
Mine eyes the savage and polite inspir'd.
Whene'er I spoke, my wit new conquests won,
Thousands come here by my soft airs undone.
With wild surprise my alter'd looks they view,
And with loud curses still my flight pursue.
For learn, before too late, licentious Fair,
Each face does here an equal horror wear,
And undistinguish'd youth and age appear:
Depriv'd of ev'ry charm, and ev'ry grace,
We all descend to this detested place.

Illustrious Helen, once the Grecian pride,
In folding shades her hated form would hide;
And conscious Thais fears to be descry'd.
I saw them lately by the trembling gleams,
The pale blue light of inauspicious flames;
No blushes paint their cheeks, their wanton eyes
No more with Love's contagious darts surprise.
Rash Cleopatra mourns her hasty doom,
And glides a hideous spectre through the gloom.
Fam'd Julia through the crowd's no longer known;
Ev'n Ovid's eyes her blasted charms disown.
Curs'd be the arts that did my soul betray,
And led my easy virtue first astray.
'Tis past and my repentance comes too late;
But thou may'st yet avoid this cruel fate.
Perfidious beauty! quit the roads of vice;
Its smooth descents to certain death entice.
Like Dives, from the infernal coasts, I send,
To warn my careless unbelieving friend:
For thou, while yet a lovely guiltless maid,
To sin, by my example, was betray'd;
And should'st thou to these mournful regions come,
'Twould vastly aggravate my heavy doom.

END OF LETTERS MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.

DEVOUT EXERCISES

OF THE

HEART;

BY THE LATE PIOUS AND INGENIOUS

MRS ELIZABETH ROWE:

REVIEWED AND PUBLISHED AT HER REQUEST,

BY I. WATTS, D. D.

TO

* * * * * * * *,

AN INTIMATE FRIEND OF

MRS. ROWE.

MADAM, *Newington, Sep.* 29. 1737.

IF these pious MEDITATIONS *of so sublime a Genius, should be inscribed to any name, there is none but your's must have stood in the front of them. That long and constant intimacy of friendship with which you delighted to honour her, that high esteem and veneration you are pleased to pay her memory, and the sacred likeness and sympathy between two kindred souls, absolutely determine where this respect should be paid.*

Besides, Madam, you well know, that some copies out of these papers have been your own several years, by the gift of the deceased; and the favour you have done me lately, by your permission to peruse them, has assisted the correction of these Manuscripts, and would add another reason to support this inscription of them, if your fear of assuming too much honour could have admitted this piece of justice.

I know, Madam, your tenderness and indulgence to every thing MRS ROWE *has writen, cannot with-hold your judgment from suspecting some of her expressions to be a little too rapturous, and too near a kin to the lan-*

guage of the mystical writers; yet your piety and candour will take no such offence as to prevent your best improvement by them in all that is divine and holy: and may your retired hours find such happy assistances and elevations hereby, that you may commence the joys of angels, and of blessed spirits before hand.

And when your valuable life has been long extended, amidst all the temporal blessings you enjoy, and the Christian virtues you practise, may you, at the call of God, find a gentle dismission from mortality, and ascend on high to meet your deceased friend in paradise. Nor can I suppose that any of the inhabitants of that blissful region will sooner recognize your glorified spirit, or will salute your first appearance there with a more tender sense of mutual satisfaction. There may you join with your beloved PHILOMELA, *in paying celestial worship in exalted and unknown forms to her God, and your God; and may the harmony of the place be assisted by your united songs to* JESUS, *your common Saviour!*

I am, Madam, with great sincerity and esteem,

Your most faithful,

and obedient Servant,

I. WATTS.

THE PREFACE.

THE admirable Author of these devotional papers has been in high esteem among the ingenious and the polite, since so many excellent fruits of her pen, both in verse and prose, have appeared in public. She was early honoured under the feigned name of PHILOMELA, before the world was allowed to know Mrs Elizabeth Singer by the name drawn from her family, or that of Mrs Rowe, which she acquired by marriage.

Though many of her writings, that were published in her life-time, discover a pious and heavenly temper, and a warm zeal for religion and virtue, yet she chose to conceal the *Devotion of her heart*, till she was got beyond the censure and the applause of mortals. It was enough, that God, whom she loved with ardent and supreme affection, was witness to all her secret and intense breathings after him.

In February last he was pleased to call her out of our world, and take her to himself. Some time after her decease these manuscripts were transmitted to me, all inclosed in one sheet of paper, and directed to me at Newington by her own hand. In the midst of them I found her letter, which intreated me to review them, and commit them to the press. This letter I have thought necessary to shew the world, not so much to discover my right to publish these papers, as to let the reader see something more of that holy and heavenly character, which she maintained in an uniform manner both in life and death.

It is now almost thirty years ago since I was honoured with her acquaintance, nor could her great modesty conceal all her shining graces and accomplishments; but it is not my province to give a particular account of this excellent woman, who has blessed and adorned our nation and our age. I expect, her temper, her conduct, and her virtues, will be set in a just and a pleasing light among the memoirs of her life, by some near re-

lations, to whom the care of her poetical pieces, and her familiar letters, is committed.

These *Devout Exercises* are animated with such fire as seems to speak the language of holy passion, and discovers them to be the dictates of her heart; and those who were favoured with her chief intimacy will most readily believe it. This style, I confess, is raised above that of common meditation or soliloquy; but let it be remembered she was no common Christian. As her virtues were sublime, so her genius was bright and sparkling; and the vivacity of her imagination had a tincture of the muse almost from childhood. This made it natural to her to express the inward sentiments of her soul in a more exalted language, and to paint her own ideas in metaphor and rapture, near akin to the diction of poesy.

The reader will here find a spirit dwelling in flesh, elevated into divine transports, congenial to those of angels and unbodied minds. Her intense love to her God kindles at every hint, and transcends the limits of mortality. I scarce ever met with any devotional writings which gave us an example of a soul, at special seasons, so far raised above every thing that is not immortal and divine.

Yet she is conscious of her frailties too: she sometimes confesses her folly and her guilt in the sight of God, in the most affecting language of a deep humiliation. It is with a pathetic sensibility of her weakness, and in the strongest language of self displacency, she bewails her offences against her Creator and Redeemer; and in her intervals of darkness, she vents her painful complaints and mournings for the absence of her highest and best Beloved.

Let it be observed, that it was much the fashion, even among some divines of eminence in former years, to express the fervours of devout love to our Saviour, in the style of the Song of Solomon: and I must confess, that several of my compositions in verse, written in younger life, were led by those examples unwarily into this tract. But if I may be permitted to speak the sense of maturer age, I can hardly think this the happiest language, in which Christians should generally discover their warm sentiments of religion, since the clearer and more spiritual revelations of the New

Teſtament. Yet ſtill it muſt be owned, there are ſome ſouls favoured with ſuch beautifying viſits from Heaven, and raptured with ſuch a flame of divine affection, as more powerfully engages all animal nature in their devotions, and conſtrains them to ſpeak their pureſt and moſt ſpiritual exerciſes in ſuch pathetic and tender expreſſions, as may be perverſely profaned by an unholy conſtruction. And the bias and propenſity towards this ſtyle is yet ſtronger, where early impreſſions of piety have been made on the heart, by devout writings of this kind.

It ſhould be remembered alſo, there is nothing to be found here which riſes above our ideas; here are none of thoſe abſurd and incomprehensible phraſes which amuſe the ear with ſounding vanity, and hold reaſon in ſovereign contempt: here are no viſionary ſcenes of wild extravagance, no affectations of the tumid and unmeaning ſtyle, which ſpreads a glaring confuſion over the underſtanding; nothing that leads the reader into the region of thoſe myſtical ſhadows and darkneſs which abound in the Romiſh writers, under the pretence of refined light and ſublime ecſtaſy. Nor is the character of this ingenious author to be blemiſhed with any other reproaches which have been ſometimes caſt on ſuch ſort of meditations.

I know it hath been ſaid, that this language of rapture addreſſed to the Deity, is but a new tract given to the flow of the ſofter powers, after the diſappointment of ſome meaner love; or at leaſt, it is owing to the want of a proper object and opportunity to fix thoſe tender paſſions: but this cannot be allowed to be the caſe here; for as Mrs Rowe had been ſought early by ſeveral lovers, ſo ſhe ſpent ſeveral years of younger life in the connubial ſtate, with a gentleman of ſuch accompliſhments and ſuch circumſtances, that he was well fitted to be a partner of her joys and her cares.

I know alſo, that this ſoft and paſſionate turn of religious meditation, has ſometimes been imputed to injuries and ill treatment in the marriage-ſtate, whereby the ſame affections are weaned from an undeſerving object, and poured out in amorous language upon an object ſupremely worthy and divine. But neither has

this reproach any pretence in the preſent caſe: that happy pair had ſouls ſo near a-kin to each other, that they perſevered in uncommon amity, and mutual ſatisfaction, ſo long as providence favoured him with life. It is ſufficiently evident, then, that in theſe meditations there is no ſecret panting after a mortal love, in the language of devotion and piety.

Nor yet can it be objected, that it was any diſplacency and peevishneſs toward other things round about her, that taught her to expreſs herſelf with ſuch contempt of the things of mortality, and all the gay and tempting ſcenes of the preſent ſtate? ſhe was by no means ſour and moroſe, and out of humour with the world, nor with her acquaintance that dwelt in it: ſhe often converſed freely with the gay and the great, and was in high eſteem among perſons of rank and honour. But honour and rank among mortals, with all the ſcenes of gaiety and greatneſs, were little, deſpicable, and forgotten things, while, in her devout moments, her eye and her heart were fixed on God, the ſupreme original of all excellence and all honour.

In common life ſhe was affable and friendly with perſons of every rank and degree; and in her later years, as ſhe drew nearer to heaven, if ſhe avoided any thing, it was grandeur and public appearances on earth. But ſhe never ſo concealed and abſtracted herſelf from the ſociety of any of her fellow-creatures, as to deſpiſe the meaneſt of her ſpecies. She ever was kind and compaſſionate to the diſtreſſed, and largely liberal to the indigent. Nor did ſhe neglect the daily duties of human life, under a vain imagination, that ſhe moved in a higher ſphere, and was ſeraphically exalted above them.

In ſhort, there is nothing in theſe papers that can juſtly ſupport any ſuch ſort of cenſures, though men of corrupt minds may cover the Bible itſelf with ſlander and ridicule. Let all ſuch readers ſtand aloof, nor touch theſe ſacred leaves, leſt they pollute them.

Though there is not one complete copy of verſes amongſt all theſe tranſports of her ſoul, yet ſhe ever carried with her a reliſh of poeſy even into her ſacred retirements. Sometimes ſhe ſprings

her flight from a line or two of verſe, which her memory had impreſſed upon her heart: ſometimes from the midſt of her religious elevations ſhe lights down upon a few lines of ſome modern poet, even Herbert as well as Milton, &c. though it is but ſeldom ſhe cites their names. At other times the verſes ſeem to be the effuſion of her own rapturous thoughts in ſudden melody and metre; or at leaſt I know not whence the lines are copied; but ſhe moſt frequently does me the honour to make uſe of ſome of my writings in verſe in theſe holy meditations of her heart. Bleſſed be that God, who has ſo far favoured any thing my pen could produce, as to aſſiſt ſo ſublime a devotion.

From the different appearance of the paper and ink in ſome of theſe pieces, as well as from the early tranſcripts of ſeveral of them among her friends, it is evident they were written in her younger days; others are of a much later original, though there is but one that bears a date, and that is April 30th 1735. They ſeem to have been penned at ſpecial ſeaſons and occaſions throughout the courſe of her life. A few of them bear the corrections or additions of her own pen, which diſcovers itſelf by a little difference of the hand-writing.

Though ſhe was never tempted away from our common Chriſtianity into the faſhionable apoſtacies of the age: yet I am well informed from many hands, that in her later years ſhe entered with more zeal and affection into ſome of the peculiar doctrines of the goſpel: and it is evident that ſome of theſe devotional pieces have a more evangelic turn than others, and probably moſt of thoſe were compoſed or corrected in the latter part of life. The oppoſition which has of late been made to ſome of theſe truths, gave occaſion to her further ſearch into them, and her zeal for them. However, I have placed theſe papers all as I found them, pinned up in a wrapping paper, though it is evident, from plain circumſtances, this is not the order in which they were written, nor is that of any great importance.

Though theſe writings give us the aſpirations of a devout ſoul, in her holy retirements, when ſhe had no deſign to preſent the public with them; yet they did not want a great deal of adjuſt-

ment or correction, in order to ſee the light. The numbers and the titles are added by the publiſher, as well as the breaks and pauſes, which give a ſort of reſt to the reader's mind, and make the review more eaſy. Here and there a too ventrous flight is a little moderated; ſometimes a meditation or a ſentence is completed, which ſeemed very imperfect, or a ſhort line or two inſerted, to introduce the ſenſe, where the language ſeemed too abrupt, or the meaning too obſcure. Her ſoul had a large ſet of ideas, in preſent view, which made every expreſſion ſhe uſed eaſy and perſpicuous to herſelf, when ſhe wrote only for her own uſe: though ſometimes her entire ſenſe might not be quite ſo obvious to every reader, without a little introduction into her track of ſentiments. Upon the whole, I muſt acknowledge I was very unwilling that this excellent work ſhould loſe any degrees of elegance or brightneſs by paſſing through my hands.

When the manuſcript came firſt under my reviſal, I read it over with the eye of a critic and a friend, that I might publiſh it with honour to the hand that wrote it, and with religious entertainment and advantage to the world; nor was this employment deſtitute of its proper ſatisfaction. But never did I feel the true pleaſure of theſe meditations, till I had finiſhed this labour of the *head*, and began to read them over again as *Devout Exerciſes of the Heart*; then I endeavoured to enter more entirely into the ſpirit of the pious author, and attempted to aſſume her language as my own. But how much ſuperior was the ſatisfaction which I received from this review, eſpecially whereſoever I had reaſon to hope, I could pronounce her words with ſincerity of ſoul? How happily did this raiſe and entertain all my pleaſing paſſions, and gave me another ſort of delight than the dry critical peruſal of them, in order to judge concerning their propriety? But I confeſs alſo, it was an abaſing and mortifying thought, when I found how often I was conſtrained to drop the ſublime expreſſion from my lips, or forbid my tongue to uſe it, becauſe my own attainments ſunk ſo far beneath thoſe ſacred elevations of ſpirit, and fell ſo far ſhort of thoſe tranſcendent degrees of divine affection and zeal.

Let me perſuade all that peruſe this book, to make the ſame experiment that I have done: and when they have ſhut out the world, and are reading in their retirements, let them try how far they can ſpeak this language, and aſſume theſe ſentiments as their own: and by aſpiring to follow them, may they find the ſame ſatisfaction and delight, or at leaſt learn the profitable leſſons of ſelf-abaſement and holy ſhame: and may a noble and glorious ambition excite in their breaſts a ſacred zeal to emulate ſo illuſtrious an example. Whatſoever ardours of divine love have been kindled, in a ſoul united to fleſh and blood, may alſo be kindled by the ſame influences of grace in other ſpirits, labouring under the ſame clogs and impediments.

But perhaps, it will be neceſſary here to give a caution to ſome humble Chriſtians, that they would not make theſe higher elevations of piety and holy joy the teſt and ſtandard by which to judge of the ſincerity of their own religion. Ten thouſand ſaints are arrived ſafe at paradiſe, who have not been favoured like St Paul, with a rapture into the third heaven, nor could ever ariſe to the affectionate tranſports, and devout joys of Mrs Rowe; yet I hope all ſerious readers may find ſomething here, which, through the aids of the bleſſed Spirit, may raiſe them above their uſual pitch, may give a new ſpring to their religious pleaſures, and their immortal hopes, and thereby render their lives more holy and heavenly.

That the publication of this little book may be favoured with the divine bleſſing for this happy end, is the ſincere deſire and requeſt of the publiſher, as it was the real motive of the ingenious and pious writer, to commit them by my hand to the public view. This ſufficiently diſcovers itſelf in the following letter:

TO

THE REVEREND DR WATTS,

At Newington.

SIR,

THE opinion I have had of your piety and judgment, is the reason of my giving you the trouble of looking over these papers, in order to publish them; which I desire you to do as soon as you can conveniently: only you have full liberty to suppress what you think proper.

I think there can be no vanity in this design, for I am sensible such thoughts as these will not be for the taste of the modish part of the world; and before they appear, I shall be entirely disinterested in the censure or applause of mortals.

The reflections were occasionally written, and only for my own improvement; but I am not without hopes that they may have the same effect on some pious minds, as the reading the experiences of others have had on my own soul. The experimental part of religion has generally a greater influence than its theory; and if, when I am sleeping in the dust, these soliloquies should kindle a flame of divine love in the heart of the lowest and most despised Christian, be the glory given to the great Spring of all grace and benignity.

I have now done with mortal things, and all to come is vast eternity! —Eternity!—How transporting is the sound! As long as God exists, my being and happiness is secure. These unbounded desires, which the wide creation cannot limit, shall be satisfied for ever. I shall drink at the fountain head of pleasure, and be refreshed with the emanations of original life and joy. I shall hear the voice of uncreated harmony, speaking peace and ineffable consolation to my soul.

I expect eternal life, not as a reward of merit, but a pure act of bounty. Detesting myself in every view I can take, I fly to the righteousness and atonement of my great Redeemer for pardon and salvation;

this is my only consolation and hope. Enter not into judgment, O Lord, with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no flesh be justified.

Through the blood of the Lamb, I hope for an entire victory over the last enemy; and that before this comes to you, I shall have reached the celestial heights; and while you are reading these lines, I shall be adoring before the throne of God, where faith shall be turned into vision, and these languishing desires satisfied with the full fruition of immortal love. Adieu.

ELIZ. ROWE.

EXERCISES OF THE HEART:

IN

MEDITATION, SOLILOQUY,
PRAYER, PRAISE,
&c. &c. &c.

.....O Thou, my all!
My theme, my inspiration! and my crown!
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth,.....my world!
My light in darkness! and my life in death!
My boast thro' time! bliss in eternity!
Eternity too short to speak thy praise!
Or fathom thy profound of love to man! YOUNG.

I. *Supreme Love to God.*

WHY, O my God, must this mortal structure put so great a separation between my soul and thee? I am surrounded with thy essence, yet I cannot perceive thee; I follow thee, and trace thy footsteps in heaven and earth, yet I cannot overtake thee; thou art before me, and I cannot reach thee, and behind me, and I perceive thee not.

O thou, whom unseen, I love, by what powerful influence dost thou attract my soul? The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive what thou art;

and yet I love thee beyond all that my eye has seen, or my ear heard, beyond all that my heart can comprehend. Thou dwellest in the heights of glory, to which no human thought can soar, and yet thou art more near and intimate to my soul than any of the objects of sense. These ears have never heard thy voice, and yet I am better acquainted with thee, and can rely on thee with more confidence than on the dearest friend I have on earth.

My heart cleaves to thee, O Lord, as its only refuge, and finds in thee a secret and constant spring of consolation. I speak to thee with the utmost confidence, and think thy being my greatest happiness. The reflection on thy existence and greatness recreates my spirits, and fills my heart with alacrity; my soul overflows with pleasure; I rejoice, I triumph in thy independent blessedness and absolute dominion. Reign, O my God, for ever, glorious and uncontrouled.

I, a worm of the earth, would join my assent with the infinite orders above, with all thy flaming ministers, who rejoice in thy kingdom and glory.

Tho' not with them, thy happier race, allow'd
To view the bright unveil'd divinity;
(By no audacious glance from mortal eyes,
Those mystic glories are to be profan'd,)
But yet I feel the same immortal flame,
And love thee, tho' unseen.

I love thee.—Thus far I can speak, but all the

rest is unutterable; and I must leave the pleasing tale untold, till I can talk in the language of immortality: and then I will begin the transporting story, which shall never come to an end, but be still and still beginning: for thy beauties, O thou fairest of ten thousand, will still be new, and shall kindle fresh ardour in my soul to all eternity. The sacred flame shall rise, nor find any limits till thy perfections find a period.

I love thee, and O thou that knowest all things, read the characters that love has drawn on my heart: what excellence but thine in heaven and earth, could raise such aspirations of soul, such sublime and fervent affections as those I feel? what could fix my spirit but boundless perfection? what is there else for whose sake I could despise all created glory? why am I not at rest here among sensible enjoyments? whence arise these importunate longings, these infinite desires? why does not the complete creation satisfy, or at least delude me with a dream of happiness? why do not the objects of sense awake a more ardent sentiment than things distant and invisible? why should I, who "say to corruption, Thou art my father," aspire after an union with the immense Divinity?

You angels of God, that behold his face, explain to me the sacred mystery; tell me how this heavenly flame began, unriddle its wondrous generation: who hath animated this mortal frame with

celestial fire, and given a clod of earth this divine ambition? what could kindle it but the breath of God, which kindled up my soul? and to thee, its amiable original, it ascends, it breaks through all created perfection, and keeps on its restless course to the first pattern of beauty.

Ye flowery varieties of the earth, and you sparkling glories of the skies, your blandishments are vain, while I pursue an excellence that casts a reproach on all your glory. I would fain close my eyes on all the various and lovely appearances you present, and would open them on a brighter scene. I have desires which nothing visible can gratify; to which no material things are suitable. O when shall I find objects more entirely agreeable to my intellectual faculties? my soul springs forward in pursuit of a distant good, whom I follow by some faint ray of light, which only glimmers by short intervals before me. Oh when will it disperse the clouds, and break out in full splendour on my soul?

But what will the open vision of thy beauties affect, if, while thou art but faintly imagined, I love thee with such a sacred fervour? to what blessed heights shall my admiration rise, when I shall behold thee in full perfection; when I shall see thee as thou art, exalted in majesty and complete in beauty? how shall I triumph then in thy glory, and in the privileges of my own being? what ineffable thoughts will rise to find myself united to

the all-sufficient Divinity, by ties which the sons of men have no names to express, by an engagement that the revolutions of eternal years shall not dissolve? the league of nature shall be broken, and the laws of the mingled elements be cancelled; but my relation to the almighty God shall stand fixed and unchangeable as his own existence: "Nor life, nor death, nor angels, nor principali-"ties, nor powers, nor things present, nor things "to come, shall ever separate me from his love."

Triumph, O my soul, and rejoice; look forward beyond the period of all terrestrial things: look beyond ten thousand ages of celestial blessedness, look forward still, and take an immeasurable prospect; press on, and leave unnumbered ages behind, ages of ineffable peace and pleasure; plunge at once into the ocean of bliss, and call eternity itself thy own.

There are no limits to the prospect of my joy; it runs parallel with the duration of the infinite Divinity; my bliss is without bounds; O, when shall the full possession of it commence?

II. *The Truth and Goodness of God.*

ENGRAV'D as in eternal brass,
The mighty promise shines;
Nor can the pow'rs of darkness raze
These everlasting lines.

The sacred word of grace is strong
As that which built the skies;
The voice which rolls the stars along,
Speaks all the promises.

And they all are built on the immutable truth and goodness of thy nature; thou dost not speak at random like vain man; but whatever thou hast engaged to perform, is the result of eternal counsel and design. Thou hast uttered nothing that thou canst see occasion to alter on a second review; thou canst promise nothing to thy own damage, nor be a loser by the utmost liberality. Thou art every way qualified to make good thy engagements, by the fullness of thy riches and power.

Nor hast thou any necessity to flatter thy creatures, or to say kinder things to them than thou meanest to fulfil. Miserable man can bring no advantage to thee, nor has he any thing to claim from thee. By what benefit has he prevented thee? by what right can he demand the least of thy favours? Thy engagements are all free and unconstrained, founded on thy own beneficence, and not on the merits of thy creature. While I consider this, my expectations rise, I set no limits to my hopes: I look up with confidence, and call thee "my Father;" and with a humble faith, I claim every advantage that tender name imports. My heart confid[illegible]n thee with stedfastness and alacri-

ty; fear and distrust are inconsistent with my thoughts of the beneficence of thy nature.

Every name and attribute by which thou hast revealed thyself to man, confirms my faith. Thy life, thy being is engaged: I may as well question thy existence, as thy faithfulness; as sure as thou art, thou art just and true. The protestations of the most faithful friend I have, cannot give me half the consolation that thy promises give me. I hear vain man with diffidence, I bid my soul beware of trusting false mortality; but I hear thy voice with joy and full assurance.

Thy words are not writ in sand, nor scattered by the fleeting winds; but shall stand in force when heaven and earth shall be no more. Eternal ages shall not diminish their efficacy, nor alter what the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. I believe, I believe with the most perfect assent: I know that "thou art, and that thou art a rewarder of them "that diligently seek thee;" I feel the evidence, for thou hast not left thyself without witness in my heart.

III. *Longing after the enjoyment of God.*

My God, to thee my sighs ascend; every complaint I make, ends with thy name: I pause, I dwell on the sound, I speak it over again, and find that all my cares begin and end in thee. I long

to behold the supreme beauty, I pant for the fair original of all that is lovely, for beauty that is yet unknown, and for intellectual pleasures yet untasted.

My heart aspires, my wishes fly beyond the bounds of creation, and despise all that mortality can present me with. I was formed for celestial joys, and find myself capable of the entertainments of angels. Why may I not begin my heaven below, and taste at least of the springs of pleasure that flow from thy right hand for ever?

Should I drink my fill, those fountains are still exhaustless; millions of happy souls quench their infinite desires there: millions of happy orders of beings gaze on thy beauty, and are made partakers of thy blessedness; but thou art still undiminished. No liberality can waste the store of thy perfection; it has flowed from eternity, and runs for ever fresh, and why must I perish for want?

My thirsty soul pines for the waters of life; Oh! who will refresh me with the pleasurable draught? how long shall I wander in this desert land, where every prospect is waste and barren! I look round me in vain, and sigh still unsatisfied: Oh! who will lead me to the still waters, and make me repose in green pastures, where the weary are for ever at rest? how tedious are the hours of expectation?

Come, Lord, my head doth burn, my heart is sick,
While thou dost ever, ever stay;
Thy long deferring wounds me to the quick,
My spirit gaspeth night and day:
O shew thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Dispatch thy commissions; give me my work and activity to perform it, and let me as a hireling fulfil my day. Lord, it is enough: "What am "I better than my fathers?" They are dead, and I am mortal.

I'm but a stranger and a pilgrim here
In these wild regions; wand'ring and forlorn;
Restless and sighing for my native home,
Longing to reach my weary space of life,
And to fulfil my task, Oh! haste the hour
Of joy and sweet repose. Transporting hope!

Lord, here am I waiting for thy commands, attending thy pleasure; O speak and incline mine ear to hear; give me my work, let me finish it, and gain my dismission from this body of sin and death; this hated clog of error and guilt, of corruption and vanity. Oh! let me drop this load, and bid these scenes of guilt a final adieu.

"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord;" when wilt thou let me into thy holy habitation? how long shall I pine at this distance from thee? what can I speak to shew thee my pain, to utter my anguish, when I fear the loss of my God? Oh! speak an assuring word, and confirm my hope.

Transporting moment! when wilt thou appear,
To crown my hopes, and banish all my fear?

Again, O my Father, and my eternal Friend, I breathe out my requests to thee in this land of fatigue and folly: what is this life but a sorry tiresome round, a circle of repeated vanities? happiness has been never seen in it since sin and folly entered: all is empty appearance, or vain labour, or painful vexation.

Suffic'd with life, my languid spirits faint,
And fain would be at rest. Oh! let me enter
Those sacred seats, and, after all the toil
Of life, begin an everlasting Sabbath.

Yet again, O Lord, I ask leave to tell thee, I have waited for thy salvation, and hourly languished after the habitations of my God. My heart grows sick, and I almost expire under these delays: what have I here to keep me from thee? what to relieve the tedious hours of absence? I have pronounced all below the sun, vanity and vexation; all insipid and burdensome. Amidst health and plenty, friends and reputation, thou art my only joy, my highest wish, and my supreme delight. On thee my soul fixes all her hopes; there I rest in a celestial calm! Oh! let it not be broken with earthly objects; let me live unmolested with the cares or delights of sense.

Oh! let me flee
From all the world, and live alone to thee.

IV. *God my supreme, my only hope.*

WHY do I address thee, my God, with no more confidence? why do I indulge these remains of unbelief, and harbour these returns of infidelity and distrust? Can I survey the earth, can I gaze on the structure of the heavens, and ask if thou art able to deliver? can I call in question thy ability to succour me, when I consider the general and particular instances of thy goodness and power? One age to another, in long succession, hath conveyed the records of thy glory; "In all genera-"tions thou hast been our dwelling-place; my fa-"thers trusted in thee, and were delivered." They have encouraged me, my own experience has encouraged me to trust in thee for ever.

The sun may fail to rise, and men in vain expect its light: but thy truth, thy faithfulness cannot fail; the course of nature may be reversed, and all be chaos again; but thou art immutable, and canst not, by any change, deceive the hopes of them that trust in thee. I adore thy power, and subscribe to thy goodness and fidelity, and what further objection would my unbelief raise? Is any thing too hard for God to accomplish? can the united force of earth and hell resist his will?

Great God, how wide thy glories shine?
How broad thy kingdom, how divine?
Nature and miracle, and fate and chance are thine.

Therefore I apply myself immediately to thee, and renounce all the error and all the confidence that may arise from heaven or earth besides.

Not from the dust my joys or sorrows spring:
Let all the baleful planets shed
Their mingled curses round my head;
Their mingled curses I despise,
Let but the great, th' eternal King,
Look through the clouds, and bless me with his eyes.

Let him bless me, and I shall be blessed; blessed without reserve or limitation: blessed in my going out and coming in; in my sitting down and rising up; blessed in time, and blessed to all eternity. That blessing from thy lips will influence the whole creation, and attend me wherever I am; it shall go before me as a leading light, and follow me as my protecting angel. When I ly down, it will cover me; I shall rest beneath the shadow of the most High, and dwell safely in the secrets of his tabernacle.

Thy kingdom ruleth over all, O Lord, and thou "dost according to thy will in the armies of hea-"ven, and among the inhabitants of the earth:" I confess and acknowledge thy providence. The ways of man are not at his own disposal, but all his goings are ordered by thee; all events are in thy hands, and thou only canst succeed or disappoint his hopes. If thou blow on his designs, they are for ever blasted; if thou bless them, neither earth

nor hell can hinder their success; therefore I apply myself immediately to thee; for not all created power can assist me without thee.

Hence from my heart, ye idols, flee
Ye sounding names of vanity!
No more my tongue shall sacrifice
To chance and nature, tales and lies;
Creatures without a God can yield me no supplies.

Not all the power of men on earth, nor angel nor saint in heaven, can help or relieve me in the least exigence, if my God hide himself, and stand afar off from me. Second causes are all at thy direction, and cannot aid me till commissioned by thee.

Lord, when my thoughtful soul surveys
Fire, air, and earth, and stars, and seas,
I call them all my slaves:
Commission'd by my Father's will,
Poisons shall cure, or balm shall kill;
Vernal suns, or zephyrs breath
May burn or blast the plants to death
That sharp December saves.
What can winds or planets boast,
But a precarious power?
The sun is all in darkness lost,
Frost shall be fire, and fire be frost,
When he appoints the hour.

At thy command nature and necessity are no more; all things are alike easy to God; speak but thou the word, and my desires are granted: say, "Let there be light," and there shall be light.

Thou canst look me in peace, when the tumult of thoughts raise a storm within. Bid my soul be still, and all its tempests shall obey thee.

I depend only on thee; do thou smile, and all the world may frown; do thou succeed my affairs, and I shall fear no obstacle that earth or hell can put in my way. Thou only art the object of my fear, and all my desires are directed to thee.

Human things have lost their being and their names, and vanish into nothing before thee; they are but shades and disguises to veil the active divinity. Oh! let me break through all these separations, and see and confess the great, the governing Cause. Let no appearance of created things, however specious, hide thee from my view; let me look through all to thee, nor cast a glance of love or hope below thee. With a holy contempt, let me survey the ample round of thy creation, as lying in the hollow of thy hand, and every being in heaven and on earth as unmoveable by the most potent cause in nature, till commissioned by thee to do me good or hurt. Oh! let thy hand be with me to keep me from evil, and let me abide under the shadow of the Almighty; I shall be secure in thy provision. To thee I fly for shelter from all the ills of mortality.

V. *God a present help, and ever near.*

Thou wast found of me, O my God, when I sought

thee not: and wilt thou fly me when I seek thee? Am I giving my breath to the wind, and scattering my petitions in the air? Is it a vain thing to call upon God? and is there no profit in crying to the Almighty? "Art thou a God afar off, and not "near at hand?" Is there any place exempt from thy presence? any distance whence my cries cannot reach thee? can any darkness hide me from thy eyes? or is there a corner of the creation unvisited by thee; dost thou not fill heaven and earth; and am I not surrounded by thy immensity?

Are my desires unknown to thee? or is there a thought in my heart concealed from thee? dost not thou that hast formed the ear, hear? canst thou forget the work of thy own hands? or, retired far in the heavens, full of thine own happiness, canst thou leave thy creation to misery and disorder, helpless and hopeless? are the ways of man at his own disposal, and his paths undirected by thee? is calling on the living God no more than worshipping a dumb idol? canst thou, like them, disappoint and mock thy adorers?

Art thou unacquainted with the extent of thy own power, that thou shouldst promise beyond thy ability to perform? or art thou "as a man that thou "shouldst lie, or the son of man that shouldst re-"pent?" Is thy faithfulness uncertain, and thy power precarious? Are those perfections imagi-

nary for which men adore thee, and thy gracious names insignificant titles? Do the "children of "men" in vain "put their trust under the shadow "of thy wings?" Art not thou "a present help "in the time of trouble?" and is there no security in the secret places of the Most High? Whither then shall I look in my distress? to whom shall I direct my prayer? from whom shall I expect relief, if there is no help in God for me?

But, oh! what unrighteousness have my fathers ever found in thee? what injustice can I charge thee with? what breach of truth or want of pity? Have the records of thy actions ever been stained with the breach of faithfulness? Art thou not my only hope, and my long experienced support? Have I ever found help from the creatures when thou hast failed me? Have I, or can I have a greater certainty than thy word to depend on? Can any other power defend or deliver like thee? Thou art "a rock, and thy work is perfect; for "all thy ways are judgment; a God of truth, and "without iniquity, just and right art thou." With my last breath I will witness to thy truth and faithfulness, and declare thy goodness to the children of men.

VI. *God an all-sufficient good, and my only happiness.*

Why is my heart so far from thee,
My God, my chief delight?
Why are my thoughts no more by day,
With thee no more by night?

Why shouldst my foolish passions rove?
Where can such sweetness be
As I have tasted in thy love,
As I have found in thee?

Where can I hope to meet such joys as thy smiles have given me? where can I find pleasure so sincere and unallayed? When I have enjoyed the light of thy countenance, and the sense of thy love, has not all my soul been filled? have I found any want or emptiness? has there been any room left for desire, or any prospect beyond, besides the more perfect enjoyment of my God? Have not all the glories of the world been darkened, and turned into blackness and deformity? how poor, how contemptible have they appeared? or rather have they not all disappeared and vanished like dreams and shadows in the noon of day, and under the blaze of sun-beams?

I have never found satisfaction in any thing but in God; why then do I wander from him? why do I leave the fountain of living waters for broken cisterns? why do I abandon the full ocean in search of shallow streams? what account can I give for folly like this? I can promise myself nothing from

the creature; those expectations shall deceive me no more. It is thou, my God, thou art the only object of my hopes and desires: it is thou only that canst make me happy.

If thou frown, my being is a curse; thy indignation is hell with all its terrors. Let me never feel that, and I defy all things else to make me miserable. I seem independent on all nature; to thee only I apply myself; hear me, thou beneficent Author of my being, thou support of my life; to thee I direct my wishes, those desires which thou wilt approve, while I ask but the happiness I was created to enjoy. Oh! fix all my expectation on thee, and free me from this levity and inconstancy.

Look gently down, Almighty grace,
Prison me round in thy embrace;
Pity the heart that would be thine,
And let thy power my love confine.

Suffer me never to start from thee; such a confinement were sweeter than liberty: "Thy yoke "is easy, and thy burden light." I shall bless the chain that binds me to thee. Oh! give me such a view of thy beauty, as shall fix my volatile heart for ever; such a view as shall determine all its motions, and be a constant conviction, how unreasonable it is to wander from thee.

Is it that I relish any thing beyond thy love? Oh! No. I appeal even to thee who canst not be deceived, and knowest the inmost secrets of my soul; thou knowest where the balance of my

love falls, and that my wanderings are not deliberate; that it is not by choice that I forsake thee. I grieve, I sigh for my folly; shouldst thou forgive me, Ic an never forgive myself, for I know it is inexcuseable.

I want nothing when I am possessed of thee; without thee I want all things. Thou art the centre of all my passions; I have no hope but what is thine, no joy but what flows from thee; my greatest fears are those of losing thee; my inmost care is to secure thy favour. This is the subject of my deepest anxiety; every sigh I breathe ends in thy name, and that loved name alone allays every anguish of my soul, and calms its wildest tempests.

From thy frowns or favour all my joys or sorrows spring; thy frowns can make me infinitely miserable, thy favour can make me infinitely blessed. I can defy hell, and smile in the face of death, while I can call thee mine. My God! still let me bless the sound, and part with all things, rather than renounce my property in thee; let me hold it to my last breath, and claim it with my expiring sighs.

Secure of thee, nothing can terrify my soul; all is peaceful and serene within, eternal love and immortal pleasure; I desire no more; imagination stops here, and all my wishes are lost in eternal plenty.——My God, more cannot be asked, and

with less I should be infinitely miserable. The kingdoms of the skies should not buy my title to thee, and thy love: the blessedness of all creatures is complete here; for God himself is blessed in himself for ever.

What can I add, for all my words are faint,
Celestial love no eloquence can paint?
No more can be in mortal sounds express'd,
But vast eternity shall tell the rest.

VII. *A Covenant with God.*

INCOMPREHENSIBLE Being, who "searchest the "heart, and triest the reins of the children of men," thou knowest my sincerity, and my thoughts are all unveiled to thee; I am surrounded with thine immensity; thou art a present, tho' invisible witness of the solemn affair I am now engaged in. I am now "taking hold of thy strength, that I may "make peace with thee," and entering into articles with the Almighty God. These are the happy days long since predicted, when "one shall say, "I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself "by the name of Israel, and another shall subscribe "with his hand to the Lord; and I will be their "God, and they shall be my sons and my daughters, "saith the Lord JEHOVAH."

With the most thankful sincerity I take hold of this covenant as it is more fully manifested and explained in the gospel by Jesus Christ; and hum-

bly accepting thy proposals, I bind myself to thee by a sacred and everlasting obligation. By a free and deliberate action, I do hereby ratify the articles which were made for me in my baptism, into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; I religiously devote myself to thy service, and entirely submit to thy conduct. I renounce the glories and vanities of the world, and chuse thee as my happiness, my supreme felicity, and everlasting portion. I make no article with thee for any thing besides; deny or give me what thou wilt, I will never repine, while my principal treasure is secure. This is deliberate, my free and sincere determination; a determination which, by thy grace, I will never retract.

Oh! thou, by whose power alone I shall be able to stand, "Put thy fear in my heart, that I "may never depart from thee:" let not the world, with all its flatteries nor death, nor hell, with all their terrors, force me to violate this sacred vow. Oh! let me never live to abandon thee nor draw the impious breath that would deny thee.

And now let surrounding angels witness for me, that I solemnly devote all the powers and faculties of my soul to thy service; and when I presumptuously employ any of the advantages thou hast given me to thy dishonour, let them testify against me, and let my own words condemn me.

ELIZABETH ROWE.

Thus have I subscribed to thy gracious proposals, and engaged myself to be the Lord's; and now let the malice of men, and the rage of devils, combine against me. I can defy all their stratagems; for God himself is become my friend, Jesus my all-sufficient Saviour, and the Spirit of God, I trust, will be my sanctifier and my comforter.

O happy day! transporting moment! the brightest period of my life! heaven with all its lights smiles on thee; what glorious mortal can now excite my envy? what scene to tempt my ambition could the whole creation display? let glory call me with her exalted voice; let pleasure with a softer eloquence allure me; the world in all its splendour appears but a trifle, while the infinite God is my portion. He is mine by as sure a title as eternal veracity can confer; the right is unquestionable, the conveyance unalterable. The mountains shall be removed, and the hills be dissolved, before the everlasting obligation shall be cancelled.

VIII. *A Thank-offering for saving grace.*

"BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and all that is with-
"in me, bless his holy name: bless the Lord, and
"forget not all his benefits, who redeemeth thy
"life from destruction, and crowneth thee with
"loving kindness, and tender mercy;" who brought thee out of the mire and clay, and set

thy foot upon a rock; who broke thy fetters, and freed thee from the miserable bondage of sin. I lay, a wretched slave, pleased with my chains, and fond of my captivity, fatally deluded and undone, till love, almighty love, rescued me. Blest effect of unmerited grace? I shall stand for ever an illustrious instance of boundless mercy: to that I must entirely ascribe my salvation, and through all the ages of eternity I will rehearse the wonders of redeeming love, and tell to listening angels what it has done for my soul.

I'll sing the endless miracles of love;
For ever that my lofty theme shall prove.

My glorious Creator, why did I employ thy thoughts before I had a being? why from all eternity was an immortality designed me, and my birth allotted me in a land illuminated with the rays of sacred light? I might have been invoking the powers of hell with detesable ceremonies, instead of adoring the omnipotent God. But when thousands are lost in these delusions, why am I thus graciously distinguished? Instead of being born among the shameful vices of impious parents, and an heir to their curses, why am I intitled to the blessing of religious ancestors! Why, when I was incapable of choice, was I devoted to the God that "keeps covenant and mercy to a thousand gene-"rations of them that fear him?"

Why, when I knew thee not, didst thou sustain me? But oh! why, when I knew thee, and rebelled against thee, why didst thou so long suffer my ingratitude? Why did thy watchful providence perpetually surround me, crossing all the methods I took to undo myself? Why was I not cursed with my own wishes, and left to the quiet possession of those vanities I delighted in; those toys which I foolishly preferred to all the treasures of thy love? Why didst thou pursue me with the offers of thy favour, when I fled thee with such aversion, and had fled thee for ever, if thou hadst not compelled me to return.

Why did thy Spirit strive so long with an obstinate heart, which resisted all its motions, and turned thy patience and long-suffering into provocation and guilt? Why am I not undone by those pleasing snares in which I have seen so many deluded wretches perish? Like them I despised the unsearchable riches of thy grace; with them I had been content to share the sorry portion and pleasures of this world, if thou hadst let me alone, and I should never have inquired after thee; but why wast thou found of one that sought thee not? O why, but "because thou wilt be merciful to whom "thou wilt be merciful?"

Therefore, again with astonishment and delight, I look back on the methods of thy grace; and again I consider myself lost in an abyss of sin and misery; when there was no eye to pity me, no

hand but thine to assist me, thou madest it then the time of love. Never was grace more free and surprising than thine is; never was there a more obstinate heart than mine; and never such unconquerable love as thine. How glorious has it triumphed over my rebellious faculties? how freely has it cancelled all my guilt?

Could I have made the least pretence to merit, or have challenged any thing from thee, the benefit had been less exalted; had there been any foundation for human pride, my corrupt heart would soon have taken the advantage, and have robbed thee of thy honour, by ascribing the glorious work to the strength of my own reason, or a natural tendency to virtue; but here my virtue is for ever silenced. I am lost in the boundless abyss. O height! O depth! O length and breadth immeasurable! How unsearchable are thy ways, almighty Love, and thy paths past finding out!

Let me here begin my eternal song, and ascribe salvation and honour, dominion and majesty, to him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever, who has loved me, and ransomed me with his blood; ransomed me from a voluntary bondage, from the most vile and hopeless captivity; a captivity from which nothing but that invaluable purchase could have redeemed me.

"Infinite love! almighty grace?
"Stand in amaze, ye rolling skies!"

Bring hither your celestial harps, ye beneficent beings, who, amidst the height of your happiness, express a kind regard for man: teach me the language of paradise, the strains of immortality. But oh! it is all too feeble; the tongues of seraphims cannot utter what I owe my Redeemer. From what misery, my adorable Saviour, hast thou rescued me? From error, from sin, from snares and death, from infernal chains, eternal horror, and the blackness of darkness for ever.

Nor here my glorious Benefactor staid; but still went on to magnify the riches of his grace, and entitled me to an endless inheritance, and an immortal crown; to the fruition of God, and the unutterable joys that flow from his presence.

Mysterious depth of boundless love
My admiration raise;
O God, thy name exalted stands
Above my highest praise.

IX. *Evidence of sincere love to God.*

If I love thee not, my blessed God, I know not what I love: If I am uncertain of this, I am uncertain of my existence: If I love thee not, what is the meaning of these pathetic expressions, MY GOD, MY ALL! Thou spring of my life, and fountain of my happiness! my great reward, and my exceeding joy! the eternal object of my love, and supreme felicity of my nature! Does not my

heart attend my lips in all this language? How can this be, if my soul does not love thee?

O my God, if I love thee not, what is the meaning of this constant uneasiness at thy absence? From whence proceeds this painful anxiety of mind about thy love, and all these intense, these restless desires after thee? Why are all the satisfactions of life insipid without thee? Without my God what are riches, and honours, and pleasures to me! I should esteem the possession of the world but a trifle, or rather my eternal damage, if it must be purchased with the loss of thy favour. Thy benignity is better than life, and the moment in which I enjoy a sense of thy love are the only happy intervals of my life. It is then I live; it is then I am truly blessed: it is then I look down with contempt on the little amusements of the world, and pity them that want a taste for these exalted pleasures.

How calm, how peaceful in those seasons are all the regions of my soul! I have enough, I ask no more. Can they languish for the stream, who drink at the overflowing fountain? I have all the world, and more, I have heaven itself in thee: in thee I am completely and securely blessed, and can defy the malice of earth and hell to shake the foundation of my happiness, while thou dost whisper thy love to my soul. O blessed stability of heart! O sublime satisfaction! hast thou not told me that

thou art mine by an inviolable engagement, when my soul devoted itself sincerely to thee? Does not thy word assure me, that "the mountains shall "depart, and the hills be removed; but thy kind-"ness shall not depart, nor the covenant of thy "peace be broken?"

Hast not thou terminated my wishes, O Lord, in thyself, and fixed my wandering desires? Is it for riches or honour, for length of days, or pleasure, that I follow thee with daily importunities? thou knowest these are not the subject of my restless petitions. Do I ever balance these toys with thy favour? Oh no: one smile of thine obscures all their glory. When thou dost bless my retired devotions with thy presence, I can wink all created beauty into blackness. When I meet thee in my solitary contemplations, with what contempt do I look back on the lessening world?

How dazzling is thy beauty! how divine!
How dim the lustre of the world to thine!

How dull are its entertainments to the pleasure of conversing with thee? Oh stay! in those happy moments, cries my satisfied soul:

Stay, my Beloved, with me here;
Stay till the morning star appear;
Stay till the dusky shadows fly,
Before the day's illustrious eye.

Oh! stay till the gloomy night of life is past, and

eternity dawn on my soul. There is nothing in this barren place to entertain me when thou art gone: I can relish nothing below after these celestial banquets.

If I love thee not, what is the meaning of this impatience to be with thee? "My soul longeth, "yea fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; when "shall I come and appear before thee? Oh! that "I had the wings of a dove, for then would I fly "away and be at rest."

X. *Assurance of salvation in Christ Jesus.*

I HAVE put my treasure, my immortal part, into thy hands, oh! my dear Redeemer, and "shall "the prey be taken from the mighty?" Shall a soul consecrated to thee fall a sacrifice to hell?

Blessed God, am I not thine? and shall the temple of thy Spirit be profaned, and the lips that have so often ascribed dominion, and the glory, and majesty to thee, be defiled with infernal blasphemy, and the execrations of the damned? Shall the sparks of divine love be extinguished, and immortal enmity succeed? And shall I, who was once blessed with thy favour, become the object of thy wrath and indignation? Shall all the mighty things thou hast done for my soul be forgotten? Shall all my vows, and thy own sacred engagements, be cancelled? It is all impossible; for "thou art not as man, that

" thou shouldest lie; nor as the son of man, that " thou shouldst repent."

Thou art engaged by thy own tremenduous name for my security: my God, and my father's God, from generation to generation thou hast been our dwelling-place. I was devoted to thee in baptism by the solemn vows of my religious parents: my infant hands were early lifted up to thee, and I soon learned to know and acknowledge the God of my fathers. I have actually subscribed with my hand to the Lord, and am thine by the most voluntary and deliberate obligations. The portion of Jacob is my joyful choice; nor need I fear losing it while thy word is established as the heavens.

The Lord, who made heaven, earth, and sea,
And all that they contain,
Will never quit his stedfast truth,
Nor make his promise vain.

Were my dependence on myself, I were undone: the first temptation would shake my resolutions; I should sell the inestimable riches of thy love for a trifle, and fool away immortal pleasures for the joys of a moment; a specious delusion would seduce me from all my hopes of a glorious futurity. I shall fall a victim to my own folly, and must inevitably perish, if thou forsake me; but the Strength of Israel is my hope, the mighty One of Jacob my defence.

Thou art the Rock of ages; the fixed and im-

mutable Divinity is my high tower and my refuge, my Redeemer and almighty Saviour. These were the blessed, the glorious titles, by which thou didst at first assure my doubtful soul: these were the transporting names I knew and called thee by; and thou hast answered them through all the changes of my life.

I was thy early care; thou didst support my helpless infancy, and art the watchful guide of my unsteady youth. Which way soever I turn, I meet thy mercy, and trace thy providence; and as long as I live I will record thy benefits, and depend on thy truth; those benefits which have constantly pursued me, and that truth which has never deceiveceived me, and is engaged never to abandon me. Transporting assurance! what further security can I ask? what security can I wish beyond eternal veracity? "The mountains shall depart, and the "hills be removed; but thy kindness shall not de-"part, nor the covenant of thy peace be broken;" that covenant which has been sealed by the blood of the Son of God; and in that holy sacrament I have received the pledges of thy love. Thou didst graciously invite me into that communion, and meet me there with the most unmerited favour.

Fear not, sayst thou, poor trembling soul, for I am thy Redeemer and thy mighty Saviour, the hope of Israel; and, in my name, shall all the nations of

the earth be blessed: "I am gracious and merci-
"ful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness
"and truth:" these are the titles by which I have revealed myself to men; I came the expected Messiah, the Star of Jacob, and the glory of the Gentiles. I came from the fulness of ineffable glory, in the form of man, to redeem the race of Adam. I am willing and able to save, and "whosoever "comes to me, I will in no wise cast away." Fear not, I had kind designs towards thee from eternity; and by these visible signs of my body and blood, I seal my love to my soul; take here the pledges of heaven, the assurances of everlasting happiness.

It is enough, replied my transported soul; divide the world as thou wilt, let others unenvied share in its glory; thy love is all I crave, I am blessed with that assurance, I am surrounded with the joys of paradise; every place is a heaven, while my Beloved is mine, and I am his.

If all the monarchs, whose command supreme
Divides the wide dominion of this ball,
Should offer each his boasted diadem,
I would not quit thy favour for them all:
These trifles with contempt I would resign;
The world's a toy, while I can call thee mine.

Let God and angels witness for me, that I renounce the world, and chuse thy love as my portion; witness that I sacrifice my darling sins to

thee, and from this moment solemnly devote myself to thy service.

Thus did I engage myself to be the Lord's, and thus didst thou graciously condescend to seal the privileges of the new covenant to my soul. And O let the solemn transaction never be forgotten; let it be writ in the volumes of eternity; let it be engraven in the books of unalterable destiny; there let the sacred articles stand recorded, and be had in everlasting remembrance.

XI. *Thou art my God.*

O God, thou art my God; thou art thy own blessedness, the centre of thy own desires, and the boundless spring of thy own happiness. Thou art immutable, and infinitely perfect, and therein consists thy blessedness and glory: but that thou art my God, it is from thence flows all my consolation; this glorious privilege is my dignity and boast, "Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; my "father's God, and I will exalt thee; the Lord li- "veth, and blessed be my rock, and let the God "of my salvation be exalted. Thy benignity is "better than life, therefore my lips shall praise "thee."

I have all things in possessing thee; I find no want, no emptiness within; my wishes are answered, and all my desires appeased, when I believe my title to thy favour secured. Whatever tempests a-

rise, whatever darkness surrounds me, yet thou art my God, I cry, and the storms are appeased, and the darkness vanishes. I find my expectations from the world disappointed, my friends false, and human dependence vain; but still thou art my God, my unfailing confidence, my rock, my everlasting inheritance. Death and hell level their darts against me; but with a heavenly tranquillity I cry, "Thou art my God; I dwell on high; my place "of defence is the munition of rocks."

My hiding-place, my refuge, tow'r,
And shield, art thou, O Lord:
I firmly anchor all my hopes
On thy unerring word.

While thou art mine, what can I fear? Can Omnipotence be vanquish'd? Can almighty strength be opposed? When it can, then, and not till then, shall I want security; then, and not till then, shall my confidence be shaken, and my hopes confounded.

Thou art my God: let me again repeat the glorious accents, and hear the pleasurable sounds. Let me a thousand and a thousand times repeat it; it is rapture all, and harmony; the harps of angels and their tongues, what note more melodious could they sing or play; What but these transporting words give the emphasis to all their joys? On this they dwell; it is their eternal theme, Thou art my God. Like me every seraph boasts the glorious property, and owes his happiness to those impor-

tant words: in them unbounded joys are comprehended, paradise itself, all heaven, is here described; all that is possible to be uttered of celestial blessedness is here contained.

My God, my all-sufficient good,
My portion, and my choice:
In thee my vast desires are fill'd,
And all my pow'rs rejoice.

My God, my triumph, and my glory, let others boast of what they will, and pride themselves in human securities; let them place their confidence in their wealth, their honour, and their numerous friends; I renounce all earthly dependence, and glory only in my God.

From him alone my joys shall rise,
And run eternal rounds,
Beyond the limits of the skies,
And all created bounds.

When death shall remove all other supports, and force me to quit my title to the dearest names below, in my God I shall have an unchangeable propriety: That engagement shall remain firm when I shall lose my hold of all other enjoyments; when all human things vanish with an everlasting flight, I shall bid them a joyful adieu, and breathe out my soul with this triumphant exclamation, Thou art my God, my inheritance, my eternal possession; nor death, nor hell, shall ever separate me from thy love.

Thou art my God. Let me survey the extent of my blessedness; let me take a prospect of my vast possession; let me consider its dimensions; O height! O depth! O length and breadth immeasurable! I have all that is worth possessing; thou art my God.

But what have I uttered? Is mortality permitted to speak these daring words? Can the race of man make such glorious pretensions? Thou thyself canst give no more; thou that art thy own happiness, and the spring of joy to all thy creatures; with thee are the fountains of pleasure, and in thy presence is fulness of joy; immortal life and happiness flow from thee; and they are necessarily blessed who are surrounded with thy favour; thou art their God, and thou art my God, to everlasting ages.

Earth flies with all the charms it has in store,
Its snares and gay temptations are no more.
Creatures no more of entity can boast,
The streams, the hills, and tow'ring groves are lost.
The sun, the stars, and the fair fields of light
Withdraw, and now are vanish'd from my sight,
And God is all in all.

XII. *Confession of sin, with hope of pardon.*

BREAK, break, insensible heart! Let confusion cover me, and darkness, black as my own guilt, surround me. Lord, what a monster am I become? How hateful to myself for offending thee? How

much more detestable to thee, to thee against whom I have offended? Why have I provoked the God on whom my being every moment depends? The God, who out of nothing advanced me to a reasonable and immortal nature, and put me in a capacity of being happy for ever? The God whose goodness has run parallel with my life; who has preserved me in a thousand dangers, and kept me even from the ruin I courted, and even while I repined at the providence that saved me.

How often has he recovered me from eternal misery, and brought me back from the very borders of hell, when there was but a dying groan, but one faint sigh between me and everlasting perdition When all human help failed, and my mournful friends were taking their last farewells; when every smiling hope forsook me, and the horrors of death surrounded me, to God I cried from the depths of misery and despair; I cried, and he was entreated, and rescued my life from destruction; he "brought me out of the miry clay, and set my "feet upon a rock." A thousand instances of thy goodness could I recount, and all to my own confusion.

Could I consider thee as my enemy, I might forgive myself; but when I consider thee as my best friend, my tender Father, the sustainer of my life, and the author of my happiness, good God! what a monstrous thing do I appear, who have sinned a-

gainst thee? Could I charge thee with severity, or call thy laws rigorous and unjust, I had some excuse; but I am silenced there by the conviction of my own reason, which assents to all thy precepts as just and holy. But to heighten my guilt, I have violated the sacred rules I approve; I have provoked the justice I fear, and offended the purity I adore.

Yet still there are higher aggravations of my iniquity; and what gives me the utmost confusion is, that I have sinned against unbounded love and goodness; horrid ingratitude! Here lies the emphasis of my folly and misery; the sense of this torments me, can I not say, as much as the dread of hell, or the fears of losing heaven? Thy love and tender compassion, the late pleasing subjects of my thoughts, are, on this account, become my terror. The titles of an enemy and a judge scarce sound more painful to my ears, than those of a friend and benefactor, which so shamefully enhance my guilt: those sacred names confound and terrify my soul, because they furnish my conscience with the most exquisite reproaches; the thoughts of such goodness abused, and such clemency affronted, seem to me almost as insupportable, as those of thy wrath and severity.

O whither shall I turn? I dare not look upward; the sun and stars upbraid me there. If I look downward, the fields and fountains take their

Creator's part, and heaven and earth conspire to aggravate my sins; those common blessings tell me, how much I am indebted to thy bounty; but, Lord, when I recall thy particular favours, I am utterly confounded; what numerous instances could I recount? Nor has my rebellion yet shut up the fountain of thy grace, for yet I breathe, and yet I live, and live to implore a pardon: heaven is still open, and the throne of God accessible. But oh! with what confidence can I approach it? What motives can I urge, but such as carry my own condemnation in them?

Shall I urge thy former pity and indulgence? This were to plead against myself; and yet thy clemency, that clemency which I have abused, is the best argument I can bring; thy grace and clemency, as revealed in Jesus, the Son of thy love, the blessed reconciler of God and man.

O whither has my folly reduced me? With what words shall I chuse to address thee? "Par-"don my iniquity, O Lord, for it is great:" Surprising argument! yet this will magnify thy goodness, and yield me an eternal theme to praise thee: it will add an emphasis to all my grateful songs, and tune my harp to everlasting harmony. The ransomed of the Lord shall join with me, while this glorious instance of thy grace excites their wonder, and my unbounded gratitude: thus shall thy glory be exalted.

O Lord God, permit a poor worthless creature to plead a little with thee: What honour will my destruction bring thee? What profit, what triumph to the Almighty will my perdition be? Mercy is thy brightest attribute: this gives thee all thy loveliness, and completes thy beauty. By names of kindness and indulgence thou hast chosen to reveal thyself to men; by titles of the most tender import thou hast made thyself known to my soul; titles which thou dost not yet disdain, but are still compassionate, and ready to pardon,

But that thou hast, or wilt forgive me, O my God, aggravates my guilt. And wilt thou indeed forgive me? Wilt thou remit the gloomy score, and restore the privilege I have forfeited? Wondrous love! astonishing benignity! let me never live to repeat my ingratitude; let me never live to break my penitent vows; let me die ere that unhappy moment arrive.

XIII. *The absence of God on earth.*

What is hell? what is damnation, but an exclusion from thy presence? It is the want of that which gives the regions of darkness all their horror. What is heaven? what are the satisfactions of angels, but the views of thy glory? What but thy smiles and complacence are the springs of their immortal transports?

Without the light of thy countenance, what pri-

vilege is my being? What const thou thyself give me to countervail the infinite loss? Could the riches, the empty glories, and insipid pleasures of the world recompence me for it? Ah! no. Not all the variety of the creation could satisfy me, while I am deprived of thee; let the ambitious, the licentious, and covetous, share these trifles among themselves; they are no amusements for my dejected thoughts.

There was a time (but, ah! that happy time is passed, those blissful minutes gone) when with a modest assurance I could call thee "my Father, "my Almighty Friend, my defence, my hope, and "my exceeding great reward." But those glorious advantages are lost; these ravishing prospects withdrawn, and to my trembling soul thou dost no more appear but as a consuming fire, an inaccessible Majesty, my severe judge, and my omnipotent adversary; and who shall deliver me out of thy hands? Where shall I find a shelter from thy wrath? What shades can cover me from thy all-seeing eye?

One glance from thee, one piercing ray,
Would kindle darkness into day;
The veil of night is no disguise,
No screen from thy all-searching eyes;
Through midnight shades thou findst thy way,
As in the blazing noon of day.

"But will the Lord cast off for ever? Will he be "favourable no more? Has God indeed forgotten

" to be gracious?" Will he shut out my prayer for ever, and must I never behold my Maker? must I never meet those smiles that fill the heavenly inhabitants with unutterable joys? Those smiles which enlighten the celestial region, and make everlasting day above? In vain then have these wretched eyes beheld the light, in vain am I endued with reasonable faculties and immortal principles: alas! what will they prove but everlasting curses, if I must never see the face of God?

Is it a dream? or do I hear
The voice that so delights my ear?
Lo, he o'er hills his steps extends,
And bounding from the cliffs descends:
Now like a roe outstrips the wind,
And leaves the panting hart behind.

" I have waited for thee as they that wait for the " morning," and thy returns are more welcome than the springing day-light after the horrors of a melancholy night; more welcome than ease to the sick, than water to the thirsty, or rest to the weary traveller. How undone was I without thee? In vain, while thou wert absent, the world hath tried to entertain me; all it could offer was like jests to dying men, or like recreation to the damned: on thy favour alone my tranquillity depends: deprived of that, I should sigh for happiness in the midst of a paradise: " thy loving-kindness is " better than life;" and if a taste of thy love be thus transporting, what ecstacies shall I know when

I drink my fill of the streams of bliss that flow from thy right hand for ever? But when——

When shall this happy day of vision be?
When shall I make a near approach to thee?
Be lost in love and wrapt in ecstasy?
Oh! when shall I behold thee all serene,
Without this envious cloudy veil between?
'Tis true; the sacred elements * impart
Thy virtual presence to my faithful heart,
But to my sense still unreveal'd thou art.
This, though a great, is an imperfect bliss,
To see a sadow for the God I wish:
My soul a more exalted pitch would fly,
And view thee in the heights of majesty.

XIV. *Banishment from God for ever.*

"DEPART from me, ye cursed:" Oh! let me never hear thy voice pronounce those dreadful words. With what terrors would that sentence pierce my heart, while it thunders in my ears? Oh! rather speak me into my primitive nothing, and with one potent word finish my existence. To be separated from thee, and cursed with immortality, who can sustain the intolerable doom?

O dreadful state of black despair,
To see my God remove,
And fix my doleful station where
I must not taste his love,

nor view the light of thy countenance for ever; unutterable wo! there is no hell beyond it. Se-

* *At the Lord's supper.*

paration from God is the depth of misery: blackness of darkness, and eternal night, must necessarily involve a soul excluded from thy presence. What life, what joy, what hope is to found where thou art not! I want words to paint my thoughts of that dismal state. Oh! let me never be reserved for the dreadful experience, rather let loose thy wrath, and in a moment reduce me into nothing.

"Depart from thee! Oh! whither should I go from thee? "Into utter darkness?" That makes no addition at all to the wretch's misery that is banished from thy face. After that fearful doom, I should without constraint seek out shades as dark as hell, being most agreeable to my own despair, and in the horrors of eternal night bewail the infinite loss.

The remembrance of that lost happiness would render celestial day insufferable The light of paradise could not chear me without thy favour: the songs of angels would but heighten my anguish, and torment me with a scene of bliss which I must never taste. The sight of thy favourites, and the glories of thy court, would but excite my envy, and fill me with madness, while I considered myself the object of thine eternal indignation: nor could all the harmony of heaven allay the horror of that reflection.

The groans of the damned, and the darkness of the infernal caverns, would better suit my grief.

There to the cries of tormented ghosts, and to the sound of eternal tempests, I might join my wild complaints, and lament the loss of infinite bliss, and curse my own folly: but all the plagues below, if I might speak my present thoughts, should not extort a blasphemous reflection on the divine attributes; for I know I deserve eternal misery, and even in hell I think I should confess thy justice. Thy long-experienced clemency, I am sure, ought to silence my reproaches for ever, and to all eternity leave thee unblemished with the imputation of cruelty.

But oh! what agonies would the remembrance of thy former favour excite! What exquisite remorse would it give me to recal those happy moments, when thou didst bless my retired devotions with thy presence? After I have relished those divine entertainments, how bitter would the dregs of thy wrath be? Whither would thy frowns sink me, after I have enjoyed the light of thy countenance!

If I must lose thy favour, oh! let me forget what that word imports, and blot for ever from my remembrance the joys that a sense of thy love has excited: let no traces of those sacred transports be left on my soul.

But must I depart from thee into everlasting fire? Double and dreadful curse! And yet unquenchable flames, and infernal chains, (if I can judge in

this life of such awful futurities,) would be less terrible than the sense of those lost joys. That loss would endure no reflection; the review would be for ever insufferable; the ages of eternity could not diminish the exquisite regret; still it would excite new and unutterable anguish, and rack me with infinite despair.

Blessed God, pity the soul whose extremest horror is the doom of an eternal departure from thee. Draw my spirit into the holiest and the nearest union with thyself that is possible, while it dwells in this flesh; and let me here commence that delightful residence and converse with God, which nor death, nor judgment shall ever destroy, nor shall a long eternity ever put a period to it.

XV. *The glory of God in his works of creation, providence, and redemption.*

My being immediately flows from thee, and should I not praise my omnipotent Maker? I received the last breath I drew from thee, thou dost sustain my life this very moment, and the next depends entirely on thy pleasure. It is the dignity of my nature to know, and my happiness to praise and adore my great Original. But, oh! thou supreme of all things, how art thou to be extolled by mortal man? "I say to corruption, Thou art my "father, and to the worms, ye are my brethren;

"my days are as a hand's breadth, and my life is "nothing before thee; but thou art the same, "and thy years never fail. From everlasting to "everlasting thou art my God," the incomprehensible, the immutable Divinity. The language of paradise, and the strains of celestial eloquence fall short of thy perfections; the first-born sons of light lose themselves in blissful astonishment in search of thy excellencies; even they, with silent ecstasy, adore thee, while thou art veiled with ineffable splendour.

The bright, the bless'd Divinity is known
And comprehended by himself alone.

Who can conceive the extent of that power, which out of nothing brought materials for a rising world, and from a gloomy chaos bid the harmonious universe appear?

Confusion heard the voice, and wild uproar
Stood rul'd; stood vast infinity confin'd.

At thy word the pillars of the sky were framed, and its beauteous arches raised: thy breath kindled the stars, adorned the moon with silver rays, and gave the sun its flaming splendour. Thou didst prepare for the waters their capacious bed, and by thy power set bounds to the raging billows. By thee the valleys were clothed in their flowery pride, and the mountains crowned with groves. In all the wonderful effects of nature, we adore and con-

fess thy power; thou utterest thy voice in thunder, and dost scatter thy lightning abroad: thou ridest on the wings of the wind, the mountains smoke, and the forests tremble at thy approach: the summer and winter, the shady night, and the bright revolutions of the day, are thine.

> These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
> Almighty; thine this universal frame:
> Thus wondrous they; thyself how wondrous then?

But oh! what must thy essential majesty and beauty be, if thou art thus illustrious in thy works? if the discoveries of thy power and wisdom are thus delightful, how transporting are the manifestations of thy goodness? From thee every thing that lives receives its breath; and by thee are all upheld in life. Thy providence reaches the least insect, for thou art good; and thy care extends to all thy works. Thou feedest the ravens, and dost provide the young lions their prey, thou scatterest thy blessings with a liberal hand on the whole creation; man, ungrateful man, largely partakes thy bounty. Thou causest thy rain to descend, and makest thy sun to shine on the evil and unthankful; "for "thou art good, and thy mercy endureth for ever."

As the Creator and Preserver of men, thou art gloriously manifest; but oh! much more gloriously art thou revealed, as reconciling ungrateful enemies to thyself by the blood of thy eternal Son.

Here thy beneficence displays its brightest splendour: here thou dost fully discover thy most magnificent titles, "The Lord, the Lord God, merci-"ful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant "in goodness: how unsearchable are thy ways, "and thy paths past finding out!" Infinite depths of love, never to be expressed by human language! and yet, should man be silent, the stones themselves would speak, and the mute creation find a voice to upbraid his ungrateful folly.

XVI. *Longing for the coming of Christ.*

COME, Lord Jesus, come quickly: oh! come, lest my expectation faint, lest I grow weary, and murmur at thy long delay. I am tired with these vanities, and the world grows every day more unentertaining and insipid; it has now lost its charms, and finds my heart insensible to all its allurements. With coldness and contempt I view these transitory glories, inspired with nobler prospects and vaster expectations by faith. I see the promised land, and every day brings me nearer the possession of my heavenly inheritance. Then shall I see God and live, and face to face behold my triumphant Redeemer,

And in his favour find immortal light.
Ye hours and days, cut short your tedious flight;

Ye months and years (if such alloted be
In this detested barren world for me)
With hasty revolution roll along,
I languish with impatience to be gone.

I have nothing here to linger for; my hopes, my rest, my treasure, and my joys are all above: my soul faints for the courts of the Lord, in a dry and thirsty land where is no refreshment.

How long "shall I dwell in Meshech, and so-"journ in the tents of Kedar?" When will the wearisome journey of life be finished? when shall I reach my everlasting home, and arrive at my celestial country? My heart, my wishes are already there: I have no engagements to delay my farewell, nothing to detain me here; but wander an unacquainted pilgrim, a stranger and desolate, far from my native regions.

My friends are gone before, and are now triumphing in the skies, secure of the conquest, possessed of the rewards of victory. They survey the field of battle, and look back with pleasure on the distant danger: death and hell, for ever vanquished, leave them in the possession of endless tranquillity and joy; while I, beset with a thousand snares, and tired with continual toil, unsteadily maintain the field, till active faith steps in, assures me of the conquest, and shews me the immortal crown. It is faith tells me, that "light is sown for the "righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart:"

it assures me, that " my Redeemer lives, and that " he shall stand at the last day on the earth; and " though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, " yet in my flesh I shall see God: whom I shall " see for my self, and not another, and these eyes " shall behold, though my reins be consumed with- " in me. Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus." This must be the language of my soul till thou dost appear, and these my impatient breathings after thee. Till I see thy salvation, my heart and my flesh will pine for the living God.

" Grant me, O Lord, to fulfil as a hireling my " day;" shorten the space, and let it be full of action. It is of small importance how few there are of these little circles of days and hours, so they are but well filled up with devotion, and with all proper duty.

XVII. *Seeking after an absent God.*

Oh! let not the Lord be angry, and I who am but dust will speak: Why dost thou withdraw thyself, and suffer me to pursue thee in vain? If I am surrounded with thy immensity, why am I thus insensible of thee? Why do I not find thee, if thou art every where present? I search thee in the temple, where thou hast often met me; there I have seen the traces of thy majesty and beauty; but those sacred visions bless my sight no more. I search thee in my secret retirements, where I have called upon

thy name, and have often heard the whispers of thy voice; that celestial conversation hath often reached and raptured my soul; but I am solaced no more with those divine condescentions; I listen, but I hear those gentle sounds no more; I pine and languish, but thou fliest me; still I wither in thy absence, as a drooping plant for the reviving sun.

O when wilt thou scatter this melancholy darkness? When shall the shadows flee before thee? When shall the chearful glory of thy grace dawn upon my mind at thy approach? I shall revive at thy light; my vital spirits will confess thy presence; grief and anxiety will vanish before thee, and immortal joys surround my soul.

Where thou art present, heaven and happiness ensue; hell and damnation fills the breast where thou art absent. While God withdraws, I am encompassed with darkness and despair; the sun and stars shine with an uncomfortable lustre: the faces of my friends grow tiresome; the smiles of angels would fail to chear my languishing spirit. I grow unacquainted with tranquillity; peace and joy are empty sounds to me, and words without a meaning.

Tell me not of glory and pleasure; there are no such things without my God; while he withdraws, what delight can these trifles afford? All that amuses mankind are but dreams of happiness, shades and fantastic appearances; what compensation can

they make for an infinite good departed? All nature cannot repair my loss; heaven and earth would offer their treasures in vain; nor all the kingdoms of this world, nor the thrones of archangels, could give me a recompence for an absent God.

O where can my grief find redress? Whence can I draw satisfaction, when the fountain of joy seals up its streams? My sorrows are hopeless till he return; without him my night will never see a dawn, but extend to everlasting darkness; content and joy will be eternal strangers to my breast. Had I all things within the compass of creation to delight me, his frowns would blast the whole enjoyment; unreconciled to God, my soul would be for ever at variance with itself.

Even now while I believe thy glory hid from me but with a transient eclipse, while I wait for thy return, as for the dawning day, my soul suffers inexpressible agonies at the delay: the minutes seem to linger, and days are lengthened into ages; but, Lord, what keener anguish should I feel, did I think thy presence had totally forsaken me? did I imagine thy glory should no more arise on my soul? My spirits fail at the supposition; I cannot face the dreadful apprehensions of my God for ever gone. Is it not hell in its most horrid prospect? Eternal darkness, and the undying worm, infinite ruin, and irreparable damage! Compared to this, what were

all the plagues that earth could threaten, or hell invent? what is disgrace, and poverty, and pain? what is all that mortals fear, real, or imaginary evils? They are nothing compared to the terrors which the thought of losing my God excites.

O thou, who art my boundless treasure, my infinite delight, my all, my ineffable portion, can I part with thee? I may see without light, and breathe without air, sooner than be blessed without my God. Happiness separated from thee were a contradiction, an impossibility (if I dare speak it) to Omnipotence itself. I feel a flame which the most glorious creation could not satisfy: an emptiness which nothing but infinite love could fill. I must find thee, or weary myself in an eternal pursuit. Nothing shall divert me in the endless search, no obstacle shall fright me back, no allurement with-hold me, nothing shall flatter or relieve my impatience; my bliss, my heaven, my all depends on the success. Shew me where thou art, O my God, conduct me into thy presence, and let thy love confine me there for ever.

XVIII. *Appeals to God concerning the supremacy of love to him.*

O God, when I cease to love and praise thee, let me cease to breathe and live; when I forget thee, let me forget the name of happiness, and let every pleasing idea be razed from my memory. When

thou art not my supreme delight, let all things else deceive me; let me grow unacquainted with peace, and seek repose in vain: let delusions mock my gayest hopes; let my desires find no satisfaction, till they are terminated all in thee. When I forget the satisfactions of thy love, O my God, let pleasure be a stranger to my soul; when I prefer not that to my chiefest joy, let me be insensible of all my delight; when thy benignity is not dearer to me than life, let that life become my burden and my pain.

Search the inmost recesses of my heart, and if thou findest any competitor there, remove the darling vanity, and blot out every name but thine from my breast. Let me find nothing but emptiness in the creature, when I forsake the all-sufficient Creator; let the stream be cut off when I wander away, and abandon thee the fountain. Let me be destitute of assistance, when I cease to rely on thee; let my lips be for ever silent, when they refuse to acknowledge thy benefits, and make not thee the subject of their highest praise. Let no joyful strain enter at my ears, when thy name is not the most delightful sound they can convey to my heart.

I have been pronouncing heavy curses upon myself, if thy love be not my chief blessing; yet, O my dearest good, my portion, and my only felicity, might I not go on further still, and even venture immortal joys on the sincerity of my love to thee?

Blessed Lord, forgive these dangerous efforts of a mortal tongue, which are the mere outbreakings of a fervent affection. I could even dare to pledge all my hopes, and my pretensions to future happiness, (and O let not my heart deceive me), I think I could risk them all, if thou thyself art not the object of my brightest hopes, and the light of thy countenance, the height of that expected happiness.

If I desire any thing in heaven or on earth in comparison of thee, I am almost ready to say, banish me as an eternal exile from the light of paradise: even that paradise would be melancholy darkness without thee, and the obscurest corner of the creation, blessed with thy presence, would be more agreeable. Oh! where could I be happy remote from thee? What imaginable good could supply thy absence? Say, O my God, do I not love thee?

Shall I call the holy angels to witness? Shall I call heaven and earth to witness? will not the most high God himself, the possessor of heaven and earth, condescend to witness the ardour and sincerity of my love.

With what pleasure do I reflect on the obligations by which I have devoted myself to thee? My soul recollects itself, and with an entire assent gives up all its powers to thee: I would bind myself to thee beyond all the ties that mortals know. You ministers of light give me your flames, and teach me your celestial forms; let all be noble and pa-

thetic, and solemn as your own immortal vows, and I will joyfully go through them all, to bind myself to my God for ever. Say now, ye heavens and earth, say, ye holy angels, and O thou all-knowing God, say, do I not love thee?

XIX. *A devout rapture, or love to God inexpressible.*

Thou radiant sun, thou moon, and all ye sparkling stars, how gladly would I leave your pleasant light to see the face of God? Ye crystal streams, ye groves and flowery lawns, my innocent delights, how joyfully could I leave you to meet that blissful prospect? and you delightful faces of my friends, I would this moment quit you all to see him whom my soul loves; so loves, that I can find no words to express the unutterable ardour: not as the miser loves his wealth, nor the ambitious his grandeur; not as the Libertine loves his pleasures, or the generous man his friend: these are flat similitudes to describe such an intense passion as mine. Not as a man scorched in a fever longs for a cooling draught; not as a weary traveller wishes for soft repose; my restless desires admit of no equal comparison from these.

I love my friend; my vital breath, and the light of heaven, are dear to me: but should I say, I love my God as I love these, I should belie the sacred flame which aspires to infinity. It is thee, abstractly thee, O uncreated beauty, that I love; in thee

my wishes are all terminated; in thee, as in their blissful centre, all my desires meet, and there they must be eternally fixed; it is thou alone that must constitute my everlasting happiness. Were the harps of angels silent, there would be harmony for me in the whispers of thy love; were the fields of light darkened, thy smiles would bless me with everlasting day; the vision of thy face will attract my eyes, nor give me leisure to waste a look on other objects to all eternity, any farther than God is to be seen in his creatures. All their beams of grace, and joy, and glory, are derived from thee the eternal Sun, and will merit my attention no farther than they reflect thy image, or discover thy excellencies.

Even at this distance, encompassed with the shades of death, and the mists of darkness, in these cold melancholy regions, when a ray of thy love breaks in on my soul, when, through the clouds, I can trace but one feeble beam, even that obscures all human glory, and gives me a contempt for whatever mortality can boast. What wonders then will the open vision of thy face effect, when I shall enjoy it in so sublime a degree, that the magnificence of the skies will not draw my regard, nor the converse of angels divert my thoughts from thee? Thou wilt engross my everlasting attention, and I should abound in felicity if I had nothing to entertain me

but immediate communion with the infinite Divinity.

Mend thy pace, old lazy time, and shake thy heavy sands. Make shorter circles, ye rolling planets; when will your destined courses be fulfilled? Thou restless sun, how long wilt thou travel the celestial road? When wilt thy starry walk be finished? When will the commissioned Angel arrest thee in thy progress; and, lifting up his hand, swear by the unutterable name, That time shall be no more. O happy period! my impatient soul springs forward to salute thee, and leave the lagging days, and months, and years, far behind. "Make haste, my "Beloved, and be like a roe or a young hart on "the spicy mountains."

I pine, I die for a sight of thy countenance. Oh! turn the veil aside, blow away the separating cloud; pull out the pins of this tabernacle; break the cords, and let fall the curtain of mortality! Oh! let it interpose no longer between me and my perfect bliss. I feel those flames of divine love, which are unextinguishable as the lights of heaven; not death itself shall quench the sacred ardour.

Ye ministers of light, ye guardians of the just, stand and witness to my vows; and in a humble dependence on thy grace, O Jesus, may I not venture to bid these thy flaming ministers protest against me, when I change my love, and stand my

accusers at the last judgment? When I prove false to thee, may I not venture to say to them all, Bring in your awful evidence, and proclaim my perjury?

For you have listen'd, while the sacred name
That kindles in each heav'nly breast a flame,
You listen'd, while it melted on my tongue,
Flow'd from my lips, and grac'd the midnight song.
Bless'd was the time, and swiftly fled the hours,
While holy love employ'd my noblest pow'rs;
The heav'ns appear'd, and the propitious skies
Unveil'd their inmost glories to my eyes.
Oh! stay, I cry'd, ye happy moments stay,
Nor in your flights snatch these delights away;
I ask no more the rising sun to view,
To mortals and their hopes I bid adieu.

These heavens and this earth have been witnesses to my vows; the holy angels have been witnesses, and all will join together to condemn me when I violate my faith. Strengthen and confirm it, O my Saviour, and make the bonds of it immortal.

If I were only to reason upon this subject, I might say, what motive could earth, what could hell, what could heaven itself propose to tempt my soul to change its love? What could they lay in the balance against an infinite good? What could be thrown in as a stake against the favour of God? Ask the happy souls who know what the light of his countenance imports, who drink in joy and immortality from his smiles, ask them what value they

set on their enjoyments: ask them what in heaven or earth should purchase one moment's interval of their bliss; ask some radiant seraph, amidst the fervency of his raptures, at what price he values his happiness: and when these have named the purchase, earth and hell may try to balance mine. Let them spread the baits that tempt deluded men to ruin; let riches, honour, beauty, and bewitching pleasure, appear in all their charms, the sensuality of the present and past ages, the Persian delicacy, and the Roman pride; let them uncover the golden mines, and disclose the ruby sparkling in its bed; let them open the veins of sapphire, and show the diamond glittering on its rock; let them all be thrown into the balance, alas! their weight is too little and too light.—Let the pageantries of state be added, imperial titles, and the ensigns of Majesty; put in all that boundless vanity imagines, or wild ambition craves, crowns and sceptres, regal vestments and golden thrones,—— the scale still mounts——Throw in the world-entire,——it is unsubstantial, and light as airy vanity.

Are these thy highest boasts, O deluding world! Ye ministers of darkness, have ye nothing else to offer? Are these your utmost proposals? Are these compensations for the *favour of God?* Alas! that boundless word has a meaning which outweighs them all. Infinite delight, unconceivable

joy are expressed in it. The light of his countenance signifies more than angels can describe, or mortality imagine. And shall I quit all that an everlasting heaven means, for empty shadows?

Go, ye baffled tempters, go offer your toys to madmen and fools; they all vanish under my scorn, and cannot yield so much as an amusement to my aspiring thoughts. The sun, in all his spacious circuit, beholds nothing to tempt my wishes. These winding skies in all their ample round, contain nothing equal to my desires. My ambition has far different ends, and other prospects in view; nothing below the joys of angels can satisfy me.

Let me explore the worlds of life and beauty, and find a path to the dazzling recesses of the Most High. Let me drink at the fountain-head of pleasure, and derive all that I want from original and uncreated fulness and felicity.

Oh divine love! let me launch out into thy pleasurable depths, and be swallowed up of thee. Let me plunge at once in immortal joy, and lose myself in the infinite ocean of happiness.

Till then I pine for my celestial country; till then I murmur to the winds and streams, and tell the solitary shades my grief. The groves are conscious to my complaints, and the moon and stars listen to my sighs. By their silent lights I talk over my heavenly concerns, and give a vent to my

divine affections in mortal language; then looking upward, I grow impatient to reach the milky way, the seats of joy and immortality.

Come love, come life, and that bless'd day
For which I languish, come away;
When this dry soul, these eyes shall see,
And drink the unseal'd source of thee.

Oh come, I cry, thou whom my soul loveth. I would go on, but want expression, and vainly struggle with the unutterable thought.

Tell me, you sons of light, who feel the force of these celestial fires, in what language you paint their sacred violence? or do the tongues of seraphs faulter? Does the language of paradise want emphasis here, and immortal eloquence fail? Surely your happiness is more perfect than all your descriptions of it. Heaven echoes to your charming notes, as far as they reach; while divine love, which is all your song, is infinite, and knows no limits of degree or duration.

Yet I would say, some gentle spirit, come and instruct me in your art; lend me a golden harp, and guide the sacred flight; let me imitate your devout strains, let me copy out your harmony; and then,

Some of the fairest quire above
Shall flock around my song,
With joy to hear the name they love
Sound from a mortal tongue.

Blessed and immortal creatures, I long to join

with you in your celestial style of adoration and love. I long to learn your ecstacies of worship and joy, in a language which mortals cannot pronounce, and to speak the divine passion of my soul in words which are now unspeakable.

XX. *Self reproof for inactivity.*

Is it possible, that I should one day be rapt almost into the third heavens, and ere a few weeks have passed over me, I should find myself creeping amongst the insects of the earth, and almost as meanly busied as they? Can divine love, which exalted me lately into flaming transports, so far subside and grow cool within me? Can it leave me so unactive as I now feel myself? What shall I do to shame my conscience with reproaches, and renew the flame of religious zeal and vigour?

Alas! how does the activity of men about the little affairs of human life condemn my negligence in matters of everlasting consequence? Does the fond lover, with such anxiety and impatience, pursue the object of his wishes; and shall not divine beauty, and infinite loveliness, inflame my desires to a nobler height, and excite my languishing devotion?

Are the ambitious so restless and solicitous to make themselves great, and to purchase the veneration of fools? Do they lay such mighty projects, and compass their designs with such pains and dif-

ficulty, for mere pageantry and gaudy trifles; and shall I, who am a candidate for heaven, a probationer for celestial dignity, lose my title for want of diligence? Shall I faint in the noble strife, when God and angels are ready to assist me, and every moment's toil will be recompensed with eternal ages of rest and triumph?

See, see, the moments fly, the labour shortens, and the immense reward draws near; the palm of victory, the starry crown are in view; the happy realms and fields of light entertain me with their glorious prospect. Rouse thee, my soul, to the most active pursuit of these felicities: waken all thy sprightly powers, and let it never, never be thy reproach, that the vigour and intenseness of thy labours fall short of the pretensions of thy desire; or that thy holy industry should sink so far below the fervour of those affections, which in a devout hour thou hast pronounced inexpressible.

O Lord, what a mutable thing is man? what frailty works in this flesh and blood, and hangs heavy upon our better powers? It is grace, divine grace alone, can keep alive that immortal spark within us, which came first from heaven, and first taught our hears to arise and spring upward. Preserve and complete thy own work, almighty grace.

XXI. *A joyful view of approaching death.*

O Death, where is thy sting? where is thy boas-

ted victory? The conquest is mine; I shall pass in triumph through thy dark dominions, and through the grace of the Son of God, my divine leader, I shall appear there, not a captive, but a conqueror.

O king of terrors, where are thy formidable looks? I can see nothing dreadful in thy aspect. Thou appearest with no tokens of defiance, nor dost thou come with a summons from a severe judge; but gentle invitations from my blessed Redeemer, who has passed gloriously through thy territories, in his way to his throne.

Thrice welcome, thou kind messenger of my liberty and happiness! a thousand times more welcome than jubilee to the wretched slave, than pardon to a condemned malefactor: I am going from darkness and confinement, to immense light and perfect liberty: from these tempestuous regions, to the soft and peaceful climes above; from pain and grief, to everlasting ease and tranquility. For the toils of virtue, I shall immediately receive its vast rewards; for the reproach of fools, the honour and applause of angels. In a few minutes I shall be higher than yonder stars, and brighter far than they. I shall range the boundless ether, and breathe the balmy airs of paradise. I shall presently behold my glorious Maker, and sing hallelujahs to my exalted Saviour.

And now come, ye bright guardians of the just, conduct me through the unknown and trackless

ether, for you pass and repass this celestial road continually: you have commission not to leave me till I arrive at mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God: till I come to the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

Hold out, faith and patience; it is but a little while, and your work will be at an end; but a few moments, and these sighs and groans shall be converted into everlasting hallelujahs; but a few weary steps, and the journey of life will be finished. One effort more, and I shall have gained the top of the everlasting hills, and from yonder bright summit shall presently look back on the dangers I have escaped in my travels through the wilderness.

Roll faster on, ye lingering minutes; the nearer my joys, the more impatient I am to see them: after these painful agonies, how greedily shall I drink in immortal ease and pleasure? Break away, ye thick clouds, begone ye envious shades, and let me behold the glories ye conceal: let me see the promised land, and survey the happy regions I am immediately to possses. How long will you interpose between me and my bright sun? between me and the unclouded face of God? Look up, my soul, see how sweetly those reviving beams break forth! how they dispel the gloom, and gild the shades of death!

O blest eternity! with what a cheerful splendour

dost thou dawn on my soul! With thee comes liberty, and peace, and love, and endless felicity; but pain, and sorrow, and tumult, and death, and darkness vanish before thee for ever. I am just upon the shores of those happy realms, where uninterrupted day and eternal spring reside. Yonder are the delectable hills, and harmonious vales, which continually echo to the songs of angels. There the blissful fields extend their verdure, and there the immortal groves ascend: but how dazzling is thy prospect, O city of God, of whom such glorious things are spoken! In thee there shall be no more night, nor need of the sun or moon: for the throne of God and of the Lamb is in the midst of thee, and the nations that are saved shall walk in thy light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into thee, and there the glorious Lord shall be to us a place of defence, a place of streams and broad rivers; and the voice of joy, and the shout of triumph, shall be heard in thee for ever.

There holy souls perpetual Sabbaths keep,
And never are concern'd for food or sleep:
There new-come saints with wreaths of light are crown'd,
While iv'ry-harps and silver-trumpets sound;
There flaming seraphs sacred hymns begin,
And raptur'd cherubs loud responses sing.

My eyes shall there behold the King in his beauty; and oh, how ravishing will the aspects of his

love be! What unutterable ecstasies shall I feel, when I meet those smiles which enlighten heaven, and exhilarate all the celestial regions? when I shall view the beatific glory without one interposing cloud to eternity? when I shall drink my fill at the fountains of joy, and in those rivers of pleasures that flow from his right hand for ever.

XXII. *A devout resignation of self to the divine power and goodness.*

My all-sufficient friend, "my shield, and my exceeding great reward!" I have enough: unbounded avarice can covet nothing beyond thee; the soul whom thou dost not suffice, deserves to be eternally poor. Thou art my supreme happiness, my voluntary choice: I took thy love alone for my treasure in that blessed day when I entered into covenant with thee, and became thine: I made no articles with thee for the friendships, the honours, and pleasures of the world; but solemnly renounced them all, and chose thy favour for my single inheritance, leaving the conduct of my life entirely to thee.

These were my vows, and these I have often renewed; and shall I now retract such sacred obligations, and alter a choice so just and reasonable? Forbid it, gracious God! let me never be guilty of such madness. The world has disappointed

my most confident expectations, but thou hast never deceived me. In all my distress I have found thee a certain refuge, my "shield, my fortress, "my high tower, my deliverer, my rock, and he "in whom I trust." When there was none to save me, thy powerful hand has set me free; thou hast redressed my grievances, and dissipated my fears; thou hast brought me light out of obscurity, and turned my darkness into day.

When the world could afford me nothing but tempest and disorder, with thee I have found repose and undisturbed tranquillity. Thou hast been my long-experienced refuge, my unfailing confidence, and I stedfastly depend on thee for my future conduct. I cannot err when guided by infinite wisdom; I must be safe in the arms of eternal love, to which I humbly resign myself. Let me have riches or poverty, honour or contempt; whatever comes from thy hands, shall be thankfully received. I will hear no voice but thine, nor make a step but where I am following thee.

If thou wouldst leave me to choose for myself, I would resign the choice again to thee: I dread nothing more than the guidance of my own blind desires; I tremble at the thoughts of such fatal liberty; avert, gracious God, that miserable freedom. Thou foreseest all events, and at one single view dost look through eternal consequences; therefore do thou determine my circumstances,

not to gratify my own wild desires, but to advance thy glory.

Thou hast an unquestioned right to dispose of me: I am thine by necessary ties, and voluntary engagements, which I thankfully acknowledge, and solemnly renew: deliberately and entirely I put myself into thy hands. Whatever interest I have in this world, I sacrifice to thee, and leave my dearest enjoyments to thy disposal, acknowledging it my greatest happiness to be guided by thee.

"Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of "him?" that thou, who art supremely blessed, and independently happy, shouldst concern thyself with human affairs, and condescend to make our wants as much thy care, as if mortal miseries could reach thee, and interrupt immortal blessedness? Thou wouldst make us sensible of thine indulgence, by the most tender similitudes: a father's gentle care but faintly shadows thine, and all we can conceive of human pity, falls short of thy compassion? Thou dost seem to share in our calamities, and sympathize in all our grief. No friend flies to our assistance with half the speed that love brings thee, nor canst thou ever want methods to relieve those that confide in thee.

Thy providence finds or makes its way through all oppositions: the streams shall roll back to their fountains, the sun shall stand still, and the course of nature be reversed, rather than thou want means

to bring thy purposes to pass. No obstacle puts a stand to thy design, nor obstructs thy method: it is thy will that makes nature and necessity: who can stay thy hand, or say unto thee, "What dost "thou?" Thy counsel shall stand, and thou wilt do all thy pleasure. Nothing is impossible for thee to accomplish: wherever I cast my eyes, I see instances of thy power: the extended firmament, the sun and stars, tell me what thou art able to perform; they attest thy Omnipotence, and rebuke my unbelief. The whole creation pleads for thee, and condemns my infidelity.

Almighty God, forgive my diffidence, while I confess it is most inexcuseable. Thy hand is not shortened, nor are the springs of thy bounty sealed; thy ancient miracles have not exhausted thy strength, nor hath perpetual beneficence impoverished thee; thy power remains undiminished, and thy mercy endureth for ever. That dazzling attribute surrounds me with transporting glories; which way soever I turn, I meet the bright conviction: I cannot recal a day of my past life, on which some signature of thy goodness is not stamped.

Oh! who hath tasted of thy clemency
In greater measure, or more oft, than I?
Which way soe'er I turn my face or feet,
I see thy mercy and thy glory meet.

In whatever thou hast granted, or whatever thou hast denied me, thy beneficence has been mingled

with every dispensation; thou hast not taken the advantage of my follies, nor been severe to my sins; but hast remembered my frame, and treated me with the utmost indulgence. Glory be to thy name for ever.

XXIII. *Redeeming Love.*

ALMIGHTY Love, the theme of every heavenly song! Infinite grace, the wonder of angels! forgive a mortal tongue that attempts thy praise; and yet should man be silent, the mute creation would find a voice to upbraid him.

But, oh! in what language shall I speak? with what circumstance shall I begin? shall I roll back the volumes of eternity, and begin with the glorious design that determined man's redemption, before the birth of time, before the confines of creation were fixed,

> Infinite years before the day,
> Or heavens began to roll?

Shall I speak in general of all the nations of the redeemed? or, to excite my own gratitude, shall I consider myself, my worthless self, included, by an eternal decree, among the number of those who should hear of a Redeemer's name, and be marked out a partaker of that immense privilege? Before the foundations of the hills were laid, the gracious design was formed, and the blessed plan of it schemed out before the curtains of the sky were spread.

Lord! what is man? what am I, what is all the human race, to be thus regarded? O narrow thoughts, and narrower words! here confess your defects; these are heights not to be reached by you. Adorable measures of infinite clemency! unsearchable riches of grace? with what astonishment do I survey you? I am swallowed and lost in the glorious immensity. All hail? ye divine mysteries, ye glorious paths of the unsearchable Deity! let me adore, though I can never express you.

Yet, should I be silent, heaven and earth, nay, hell itself would reproach me: the damned themselves would call me ungrateful, should I fail to celebrate that grace, whose loss they are for ever lamenting, a loss that leaves them for ever desperate and undone. It is this grace which tunes the harps of heaven, and yields them an immortal subject of harmony and praise. The spirits of just men made perfect fix their contemplations here; they adore the glorious mystery, and while they sing the wonders of redeeming love, they ascribe sublime and living honours to him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever. And infinitely worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the grateful homage: who shall not praise and magnify thy name? who shall deny the tribute of thy glory?

But, alas! what can mortal man add to thee! what can nothingness and vanity give? We murmur from the dust, and attempt thy praise from

the depths of misery; yet thou dost condescend to hear and listen to our broken accents; amidst the hallelujahs of angels our groans ascend to thee, our complaints reach thee; from the height of thy happiness, and from the exaltations of eternal glory, thou hast a regard to man, poor wretched man! thou receivest his homage with delight; his praises mingle with the harmony of angels, nor interrupt the sacred concord. Those natives of heaven, those morning stars sing together in their heavenly beatitudes, nor disdain to let the sons of earth and mortality join with them in celebrating the honours of Jesus, their Lord and ours: to him be every tongue devoted, and let every creature for ever praise him. Amen.

XXIV. *Pleading for pardon and holiness.*

IMMORTAL spring of life, the fountain of all existence, the first and last, without beginning of days, or end of years; before the heavens were created thou wast, and shalt remain unchanged while they wax old and decay. Thou art infinitely blessed in thyself, thy glory admits of no addition; the praises of angels cannot heighten thy happiness, nor the blasphemies of hell diminish it. Thou canst do every thing, and thy power finds no obstacle. Thou madest heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water; thou dost according to thy will in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabi-

tants of the earth; thou holdest the waters in the hollow of thy hand, and measurest out the heavens with a span; thou comprehendest the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighest the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance; thou coverest thyself with light, as with a garment, and art surrounded with inaccessible splendour; thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises; the heavens are not clean in thy sight, but thou chargest thine angels with folly; what then is man, that drinks in iniquity like water? what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou dost thus visit him? It is because thou art good, and thy mercy endureth for ever; mercy is thy prevailing attribute. Thou art compassionate, and infinitely gracious, and hast fully manifested thy love and beneficence to the race of man, in the glorious methods of redemption from everlasting bondage and death by thy Son Jesus.

Therefore, with the lowest reverence, and most humble gratitude, I desire to prostrate myself before thee, acknowledging it my greatest honour, and undeserved privilege, to approach the Lord, and bow myself before the high God; I that am unworthy to utter thy tremenduous name, or once to lift up my eyes to heaven. To my own confusion, I here confess I have abused the mercy which I now implore, and injured that goodness and for-

bearance by my sins, which I am now addressing myself to. I have forfeited the very benefits I ask, and despised those sacred privileges which I am forced to plead; I can use scarce any motive but what would carry in it my own condemnation. Shall I implore thy mercy by the gracious terms of the new covenant, sealed by the blood of thy eternal Son? Alas! that gracious covenant I have violated, and profaned its sacred seals; I have sinned against the clearest light, and the tenderest instances of thy love; I have not only broken my obligations to thee as my Creator; but the stronger engagements of thy adoption, even the glorious privilege of being additted into thy family, and numbered among the children of God.

But still, those very circumstances that aggravate my guilt, exalt thy mercy; here the freeness and magnificence of thy grace will display itself; here thou wilt answer the indulgent title of a father in its tenderest extent; I have no sins too great for the infinite clemency to pardon. Thou art God, and not man; and as the heavens are high above the earth, so high are thy ways of compassion above all human methods.

I dare not set bounds to thy goodness, nor affirm that thus far, and no farther, divine patience extends. Thou hast pardoned and restored me to thy favour, too often for me now to despair: my

penitent sighs were never rejected, nor my humble request unanswered; I have always found the heavens open, and the throne of God accessible, thro' the blood of a Redeemer. By his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his painful death and glorious resurrection, I implore thy pardon; he has made a full atonement, and divine justice will demand no further satisfaction. "To "him give all the prophets witness, that through "his name, whosoever believes in his name, shall "receive remission of sins.

O blessed Jesus! the hope of the Gentiles, the salvation of the ends of the earth, the great Messiah, the promised Saviour, who dost answer those glorious titles in their utmost signification; to thee, my certain, my experienced refuge, I fly; O Son of God, hear me; O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on me.

O eternal Spirit, the promised Comforter, come with all thy sacred consolations; come, and be as dew to the dropping flowers, as rain to the parched ground; oh! come with thy reviving light, and dispel the darkness that beclouds my soul; break in, like the sun after a melancholy night; one beam of thine would melt this frozen, this obdurate heart, and kindle in my soul the spark of holy love; breathe upon my cold affections, and raise them to a sacred flame.

Searcher of hearts, from whom nothing is con-

cealed, whose penetrating eyes find out hypocrisy in its darkest disguise; thou knowest the desires of my soul, and art my impartial witness, that I kneel not here for the riches and honours of the world; that I am not prostrate before thee for length of days or pleasure; but that it is the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof that I seek. Give me not my portion with the rich and great; but let me have my humble lot with thy children. Let me bear contempt and derision, and suffer reproach with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season.

Thy favour is the end of all my wishes, the constant subject of my prayer. Oh! thou whose ears are open to the wants of all thy creatures, who hearest the young ravens when they cry from their nests to thee; who givest the men of the world the transitory things they choose; wilt thou deny the desires which thou thyself dost inspire and approve? O let me be filled with that righteousness which I hunger and thirst after, and be satisfied with thy likeness. Thou canst not be diminished, whatever perfection thou dost communicate to the creature; endless liberality could not make thee poor.

I ask not privileges above the capacity of my nature, nor aspire to the perfections of angels. I only beg that I may reach those heights of holiness and divine love, which souls, invested with a mortal body like mine, and encumbered with the same

human passions, attained. But in vain I strive to imitate those bright examples thou hast set before me; without thy assistance all my endeavours will prove successless. Thou knowest the frailty of my nature, and the mighty difficulties I have to encounter. I have not only the allurements of the world, but all the stratagems of hell to engage with; and a treacherous heart within, ready on all occasions to betray me into sin and endless perdition: O let my impotence and danger awaken thy compassion.

Remember thy former benignity, O Lord, and let that engage thee to grant me new supplies of that grace by which alone I shall prove victorious. Thy bounty to any of the works of thy hands must always flow from the goodness of thy own nature; for what creature can pretend to merit any thing from thee? I would urge nothing but thy own infinite mercy, when I entreat thee not to let me perish, after the wonderful things thou hast done for my soul; after all the pledges thou hast given me of thy love, let not my follies provoke thee to forsake me: but remember thy covenant, and its gracious articles, and act according to thy own ineffable benignity, which has been the glorious motive of every favour I have received from thee.

XXV. *A transport of gratitude for saving mercy.*

I BLESS a thousand times the happy day when first a beam of heavenly light broke in on my soul; when the Day-star from on high visited me, and the celestial light began to dawn. I welcomed its cheerful lustre, and felt the sacred influence. The flames of holy love awoke, and holy joys were kindled.

The earth, and all its pageantry disappeared, like clouds before the morning sun. The scenes of paradise were opened—seraphic pleasures and unutterable delights. All hail, I cried, you unknown joys, you unexperienced pleasures! compared to you, what is all I have relished till now? what is earthly beauty and harmony! what is all that mortals call charming and attractive! I never lived till now. I knew no more than the name of happiness till now. I have been in a dream during all the days of my folly and vanity; but now I awake to the life of heaven-born spirits, and taste the joys of angels.

XXVI. *Importunate requests for the return of God to the soul.*

THOU great and glorious, thou invisible and universal Being, art thou no nearer to be approached? or do I search thee amiss! Is there a corner of the creation unvisited by thee, or any place exempt from thy presence? I trace thy footsteps

through heaven and earth, but I cannot overtake thee.

Why do I seek thee, if thou art not here?
Or find thee out, if thou art every where?

Tell me, O my God and my all, tell me where thou art to be found; for there is the place of my rest. What imaginable good can supply thy absence? Deprived of thee, all that the world could offer would be like a jest to a dying man, and provoke my aversion and disdain. It is a God that I seek:

My wishes stoop not to a lower aim;
Thou, thou hast kindled this immortal flame,
Which nothing can allay.

Adieu, adieu to all human things! Let me find my God, the end of all my wishes. Why dost thou keep back the face of thy throne? Why does the cloud and sacred darkness conceal thee?

Thy voice produc'd the seas and spheres,
Bid the waves roll, and planets shine;
But nothing like thyself appears
Through all these various works of thine.

O thou fairer than all the works of thy hands, wilt thou ever hide thyself from a creature that loves and feels thee with so intense desire? I appeal to thee, O Lord, are not my breathings after thee most hearty and unfeigned? Does not my soul pant after thee with a fervour which cannot

be extinguished, and a sincerity which cannot be disguised?

For thee I pine, and am for thee undone;
As drooping flow'rs that want their parent sun.

How do my spirits languish for thee? No similitudes can express the vehemence of my desires. Wealth and glory, friends and pleasure, lose their names, compared to thee. To follow thee, I would leave them all behind; I would leave the whole creation, and bid the fields and sparkling skies adieu. Let the heavens and earth be no more; while thou endurest for ever, I can want no support. My being itself, with all its blessedness, depends entirely on thee.

Place me far from the bounds of all creation, remote from all existence but thy own. In that ineffable solitude let me be lost; let me expatiate there for ever, let me run the endless rounds of bliss.——But, alas! I flatter myself in vain with scenes of unattainable happiness. I will search thee then, where I hope thou mayst be found. I cast my eyes to the bright regions above, and almost envy the happy beings that see thy face unveiled. I search thee in the flowery meadows, and listen for thee among the murmuring springs, Then silent and abstracted from human things, I search thee in the holy contemplation: it is all in vain; nor fields, nor floods, nor clouds, nor stars reveal thee.

Oh! hear, and to my longing eyes
Restore thy wonted light;
And suddenly: or I shall sleep
In everlasting night.

Blessed Saviour, in thee we behold the face of God as a reconciled Father; and dost thou withdraw thyself? O how welcome will thy return be! How like the breakings of immortal day will thy presence cheer me! How dearly shall I prize my happiness! How fearful shall I be of every thing that would offend thee! How joyful in the blessed discovery and possession of thy love! I would whisper my bliss to the listening streams and groves.

I'd carve our passion on the bark,
And ev'ry wounded tree
Shall drop, and bear some mystic mark
That Jesus died for me.

The swains shall wonder when they read
Inscrib'd on all the grove,
That Heav'n itself came down and bled
To win a mortal's love.

But why do I flatter myself with these delightful scenes? I find thee absent still. I mourn and complain as one unpitied. What is life while thou art absent! Oh! return and bless me with thy presence, thou who knowest my distress, and art acquainted with my secret cares. Thou who art the witness of my midnight sighs, and dost hear when at the dawning day I call thee; but still

thou answerest not, and seemest deaf to my prayers. I am, it is true, a worthless wretch; but vile as I am, thou hast, in thy immense compassion, brought me into covenant with thee. "My "beloved is mine, and I am his."

He is my sun, though he refuse to shine;
Though for a moment he depart,
I dwell for ever on his heart,
For ever he on mine.

Nothing can break the sacred union; but for this confidence I were undone; but for this beam of hope I were lost in eternal darkness. "Why art "thou disquieted, O my soul, and why art thou "cast down within me? Hope in God, for I shall "yet praise him for the light of his countenance." I shall yet welcome his return, I shall yet hear his chearing voice, and meet his favourable smiles.

But why, O my God, this long suspence? Why do these intervals of night and darkness abide upon me, and torment my heart so long? Wilt thou deny a bliss so easily granted? I ask not more than is lawful for mortality to wish: I ask not the visions of angels here below; nor the beatitudes of perfected spirits; I ask but what thou hast bid me seek, and given me hopes to obtain; I ask that sacred fellowship, that ineffable communion with which thou favourest thy saints.

Oh! let me hear these heavenly whispers, that give them the foretastes of immortal pleasures;

let me be sensible of those divine approaches that kindle celestial ardour in their souls: let me meet those beams that darken all mortal beauty; let me enjoy, at this earthly distance, those smiles that are the bliss of angels in heaven. Though it is but darkly, and afar off, yet let me feel their influence, it will brighten the passage of life, it will direct me through its mazes, and gild its rough and gloomy paths: it will raise the flowers of sacred love: it will waken th divine principle within me, and set it a-glowing through all my powers. I abandon, I shall forget the vanities below, and the glories of the world will be no more. But while thou, O my God, hidest thy face, I lose my sun, I languish and die: yet to thee I will lift up my eyes, to thee I lift up my soul.

Come, Lord, and never from me go;
This world's a darksome place:
I find no pleasure here below,
When thou dost veil thy face.

XXVII. *Breathing after God, and weary of the world.*

'Tis no mean beauty of the ground
That has allur'd my eyes;
I faint beneath a noble wound,
Nor love below the skies.

If words can reach the heights of love and gratitude, let me pour out the secret ardour of my soul; O let it not offend thy greatness, that dust and vanity adores and loves thee. If thou hadst

given me other capacities, and formed any thing more suitable to my wishes, I might have found a lower happiness, and been content with something below the infinite Deity; but the scanty creation affords nothing to satisfy me, and I follow thee by a divine instinct, and mere necessity of nature.

My life is useless, and my being insignificant without thee: my reason has no proper employment; love, the noblest passion of my soul, has no object to answer its dignity. I am reduced to absolute poverty; my nature is entirely ruined, I am lost, eternally lost, undone, and abandoned to despair, if I am deprived of thee. There can be no reparation made for an infinite loss; nothing can be instead of God to my soul

I have willingly renounced all things else for thy sake: all the sentiments of tenderness and delight, that my soul ever feels for an earthly object, is mere indifference, compared to my love for thee; and it grows into hatred, when that object stands as thy rival or competitor. This is the conquering, the superior flame, that draws in and swallows up all the other ardours of my nature. My engagements with all terrestrial things, are broken; the name of father, of brother, or of friend, are no more; abstracted from thee, these tender titles give me neither confidence, nor joy, and are mere insignificant names, but as thou dost

give them an emphasis: they are nothing at all without thee; and with thee, what infinite good can be an addition?

The soul can hold no more, for God is all,
He only equals its capacious grasp,
He only overfills to spaces infinite.

Thou art my God, and I have enough: my soul is satisfied, I am entirely at rest. Divide the vain, the perishing creation to the miserable wretches that ask no other portion: let them unenvied possess the honours, and riches, and pleasures of the world; with a lavish hand divide them away: these things are but as the dust of the balance to the happy soul that knows what the light of thy countenance imports. After that there can be no relish left for the low delights of mortality.

Lost in the high enjoyments of thy love,
What glorious mortal could my envy move?

You ineffable delectations of divine love, let me have no sentiment of pleasure left but for you. My God revealing his glories and his graces in Jesus Christ his son, is sufficient for my eternal entertainment.

What if all former ideas of visible things were wiped from my soul? what if I had no imaginations, no memory, no traces left of any thing but the joys I have found in thy presence, and the assurances of thy everlasting favour? those are the only past moments I recall with pleasure, and oh!

let all the vast eternity before me be spent in these satisfactions.

Vanish, ye terrestrial scenes! fly away, ye vain objects of sense! I resign all those poor and limited faculties by which you are enjoyed; let me be insensible to all your impressions, if they do not lead me to my God. Let chaos come again, and the fair face of nature become an universal blank: let her glowing beauties all fade away, and those divine characters she wears be effaced, I shall yet be happy; the God of nature, and the original of all beauty is my God.

What if the sun were extinguished in the skies, and all the etherial lamps had burnt out their golden flames, I shall dwell in light and immortal day; for my God will be ever with me. When the groves shall no more renew their verdure, nor the fields and valleys boast any longer their flowery pride; when all these lower heavens, and this earth are mingled in an universal ruin, and these material images of things are no more; I shall see new regions of beauty and pleasure for ever opening themselves in the divine essence with all their original glories.

But oh! how various, how boundless, how transporting will the prospect be? Oh! when shall I bid adieu to phantoms and delusions, and converse with eternal realities? When shall I drink at the fountain-head of essential life and blessedness!

" ———And then,
" O what?——But ask not of the tongues of men,
" For angels cannot tell;—let it suffice,
" Thyself, my soul, shall feel thy own full joys,
" And hold them fast for ever."

Oh break my fetters, for I must be gone.——— Bring my soul out of prison; I am straitened; the whole creation is too narrow for me; I sicken at this confinement, and groan and pant for liberty. How sweet are the thoughts of enlargement? My soul is already on the wing, and practises imaginary flights: I seem to reach the heaven of heavens, where God himself resides. It is good for me to be here.———

But ah! how soon the clouds of mortal sense
Arise, and veil the charming vision?

Alas! what do I here in this waste and dreadful wilderness? this dismal region, where our delights are vanishing, and the very glimpses of future felicity we enjoy, are soon overshadowed, and surrounded with real horrors? Alas! what do I here, wasting that breath in sighs and endless complaints, that was given me to bless and praise the infinite Creator? Alas! what do I here, among strangers and enemies, in this wild inhospitable place, far from my home, and all the objects of my solid delight?

My wishes, hopes, my pleasures, and my love,
My thoughts, and noblest passions are above.

What do I here in the dominions of death and

sin, in the precincts and range of the powers of darkness? Here they lay their toils, and set their fatal snares; but, Lord, what part have they in me? I have bid defiance to the powers of darkness in thy strength, and renounced my share in the vanities of the world. I am a subject of another kingdom, and dare not enter into any terms of peace and amity, with the irreconcileable adversaries of God and my soul, which inhabit these treacherous and sinful regions. "The friendship "of this world is enmity with God." Death and destruction are in its smiles; I stand on my guard, and am every moment in danger of surprise! oh! when will my deliverance come from high?

——— When, my soul,
O when shall thy release from cumb'rous flesh
Pass the great seal of heaven? what happy hours
Shall give thy thoughts a loose to soar and trace
The intellectual world?

What glorious scenes shall open, when once this mortal partition falls, when these walls of clay shall totter and sink down into dust? Ye waters of life, ye torrents of immortal pleasure, how impetuously will you then roll in upon me, and swell and fill up all the capacities of joy in my nature? Every faculty shall then be filled, and every wish shall end in unutterable fruition. When I awake into immortal light, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness. These expressless desires will die into everlasting raptures; hope and languishing expectation will

be no more; but present, complete, and unbounded satisfactions will surround me. My God, my God himself, shall be my infinite, my unutterable joy: all the avenues of pleasure shall be open before me, the scenes of beauty and prospects of delight. "Everlasting joy shall be upon my head, "and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever."

There will be no more intervals of grief and sin; sin, that insupportable evil, that worst, that heaviest burden; here the painful and deadly pressure lies; it is this that hangs as a weight on all my joys; but, thanks be to my God, I can say, I sincerely detest and hate this vilest of slaveries, this cursed bondage of corruption; I long for the glorious liberty of the sons of God; I groan under this load of flesh, this burden of mortality, this body of death.

But grant, O Lord, I may with patience continue in well doing, and at last obtain glory and immortality through my Redeemer's righteousness. "Sanctify me through thy word of truth *," remember this request of my glorious Advocate.

XXVIII. *A prayer for speedy sanctification.*

O Lord God, great and holy, all-sufficient, and full of grace, if thou shouldst bid me form a wish, and take whatsoever in heaven or earth I had to ask, it should not be the kingdoms of this world,

* John xvii.

nor the crowns of princes; no, nor should it be the wreaths of martyrs, nor the thrones of archangels; my first request is to be made holy; this is my highest concern. Rectify the disorders sin has made in my soul, and renew thy image there; let me be satisfied with thy likeness. Thou hast compassed my paths with mercy in all other respects, and I am discontented with nothing but my own heart; because it is so unlike the image of thy holiness, and so unfit for thy immediate presence.

Permit me to be importunate here O blessed God, and grant the importunity of my wishes; let me be favoured with a gracious and speedy answer, for I am dying while I am speaking; the very breath with which I am calling upon thee, is carrying away a part of my life: this tongue that is now invoking thee, must shortly be silent in the grave: these knees are bent to pay thee homage, and these hands that are now lifted to the most high God for mercy, must shortly be mouldering to their original dust; these eyes will soon be closed in death, which are now looking up to thy throne for a blessing. Oh! prevent the flying hours with thy mercy, and let thy favour outstrip the hasty moments.

Thou art unchanged, while rolling ages pass along: but I am decaying with every breath I draw.

My whole alloted time to prepare for heaven is but a point, compared with thy infinite duration.

The shortness and vanity of my present being, and the importance of my eternal concerns, join together to demand my utmost solicitude, and give wings to my warmest wishes. Before I can utter all my present desires, the hasty opportunity, perhaps, is gone; the golden minute vanished, and the season of mercy has taken its everlasting flight.

Oh! God of ages, hear me speedily, and grant my request while I am yet speaking; my frail existence will admit of no delay. Answer me according to the shortness of my duration, and the exigency of my circumstances. My business, of high importance as it is, yet is limited to the present now, the passing moment; for all the powers on earth cannot promise me the next.

Let not my pressing importunity therefore offend thee. My happiness, my everlasting happiness, my whole being is concerned in my success: as much as the enjoyment of God himself is worth, is at stake.

Thou knowest, O Lord, what qualifications will fit me to behold thee; thou knowest in what I am defective; thou canst prepare my soul in an instant, to enter into thy holy habitation. I breathe now, but the next moment may be death: let not that fatal moment come before I am prepared. The same creating voice that said, "Let there be light, "and there was light," can, in the same manner, purify and adorn my soul, and make me fit for thy

own presence: and my soul longs to be thus purified and adorned. O Lord, delay not; for every moment's interval is a loss to me, and may be a loss unspeakable and irreparable. Thy delay cannot be the least advantage to thee. Thy power and thy clemency are as full this present instant, as they will be the next; and my time as fleeting, and my wants as pressing.

Remember, O eternal God, my lost time is for ever lost; and my wasted hours will never return; my neglected opportunities can never be recalled. To me they are gone for ever, and cannot be improved. But thou canst change my sinful soul into holiness, by a word, and set me now in the way to everlasting improvement.

O let not the Spirit of God restrain itself, but bless me according to the fulness of thy own being, according to the riches of thy grace in Christ Jesus, according to thy infinite inconceivable love, manifested in that glorious gift of thy beloved Son, wherein the fulness of the Godhead was contained. It is through his merit and mediation I humbly wait for all the unbounded blessings I want or ask for.

XXIX. *Gratitude for early and peculiar favours.*

Let me trace back thy mercy, O my God, from the first early dawn of life, and bless thee for the privileges of my birth, that it was not in the lands

of darkness, where no ray of the gospel had ever darted its light; where the name of a Saviour never had reached my ears, nor the transporting tidings of redemption from eternal misery had ever blessed my soul.

But how shall I express my gratitude for that grace which ordained my lot in this happy land! of one of the islands of which it was long since prophesied, "They shall see thy glory, and trust in thy name." God has enlarged Japhet, even the islands of the sea, and made him to dwell in the tents of Shem, in the inheritance of Abraham. I have my descent from the Gentiles, who were once strangers to the covenant of grace, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; but are now brought nigh by the blood of sprinkling. Jesus, the great peacemaker, hath brought both near to God, and to each other.

I bless thee with all my powers, for the priviledge of my descent from pious ancestors; that thou hast been their dwelling-place from generation to generation, and hast not taken thy loving-kindness from their seed, nor suffered thy faithfulness to fail.

Thou hast extended thy mercy on me, the last and least of all my father's house, unworthy to wipe the feet of the meanest of the servants of my Lord; and yet, by an absolute act of goodness, I am brought into thy family, and numbered with the

children of God. Even so it has seemed good in thy sight, who art gracious to whom thou wilt be gracious.

I might have been a vessel of wrath, a trophy to thy justice, instead of a monument of thy mercy. How unsearchable are thy ways! how uncontrolled and free! Thou didst regard me in my low estate, in more than my original guilt and misery; for I had improved the wretched stock, and been a voluntary, as well as a natural slave to sin and death.

From this ignominious slavery, thou, my great Redeemer, hast ransomed me, and brought me into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. I was a stranger, and thou didst take me in; naked, and thou hast clothed me with the spotless robes of thy own righteousness; I was hungry, and thou didst feed me; thirsty, and thou didst give me to drink of the fountain of life.

What am I, O Lord, and what is my father's house, that thou hast dealt thus graciously with me, in entering into an everlasting covenant, signed and sealed, even sensibly sealed to my soul by the witness of the Spirit? Lord! why me, rather than many that were companions of my early vanities and folly! Whence were the motives drawn but from thy sovereign pleasure? How many are passed by, that could have done thee more service, and returned a warmer acknowledgment to thy distinguishing bounty!

Ye spirits of just men made perfect, ye ransomed nations triumphant above, instruct me in the art of celestial eloquence; tell in what strains of sacred harmony you express your gratitude for this glorious redemption, while, in exalted raptures, you sing to him that loved and washed you in his own blood, and made you kings and priests to God.

XXX. *Aspiring after the vision of God in Heaven.*

"I BESEECH thee, shew me thy glory:" it was a mortal, in a state of frailty and imperfection, that made this bold, but pious request, which I repeat on different terms: since none can see thy face and live, let me die to behold it. This is the only request I have to make, and this will I seek after, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord: not as I have seen it in thy sanctuary below; but in full perfection and splendour, as thou art seen by seraphs and cherubs, by angels and archangels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

O my God, forgive my importunity; thou hast commanded me to love thee with all my heart, my soul, my strength, and hast by thy Spirit kindled the sacred flame in my breast; from this rises my present impatience; from hence the ardour of my desires spring. Can I love thee, and be satisfied at this distance from thee? Can I love thee, and not long to behold thee in perfect excellence and beauty? Is it a crime to press forward to the end for

which I was created? All my wishes and my hopes of happiness terminate in thee.

Does not the thirsty traveller pine for some refreshing stream? would not the weary be at rest, or the wretched captive free? and shall not my thirsty, weary, captive soul, long for refreshment, liberty, and rest? I am but a stranger, a pilgrim here, and have no abiding place; this is not my rest, my home; and yet if thou hast any employment for me, though the meanest office in thy family, I will not repine at my stay.

But, O Lord, thou hast no need of such worthless service I can pay thee; thy angels are spirits, thy ministers flames of fire; thousands of thousands stand before thee, and ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto thee: they attend thy orders, and fly at thy command. O deliver me from this burden of mortality, and I will serve thee with a zeal as pure and active as theirs.

I can speak of thy loving-kindness to the children of men in a very imperfect manner; but then I will join with the celestial quire, in praising thee, and rehearse to listening angels what thou hast done for my soul. Here I have a thousand interruptions from the delightful work, a thousand cold and darksome intervals, when my heart and tongue are both untuned, a thousand necessary distractions that rise from the miseries of mortality; but when these intervals of grief

and sin shall cease, my soul shall dwell at ease, and be for ever glad, and rejoice in thy salvation.

XXXI. *A surrender of the soul to God.*

COMMAND me what thou wilt, O Lord, give me but strength to obey thee; be thy terms never so severe, O let us never part. I resign my will, my liberty, my choice to thee; I stand divested of the world, and ask only thy love as my inheritance. Give or deny me what thou wilt, I leave all the circumstances of my future time in thy hands: let the Lord guide me continually: here I am, do with me what seemeth good in thy sight, only do not say, "Thou hast no pleasure in me."

Let me not live to dishonour thee, to bring a reproach on thy name, to profane the blood of the Son of God, and grieve the Spirit of grace. O take not thy loving-kindness from me, nor suffer thy faithfulness to fail. Thou hast sworn by thy holiness, and thou wilt not lie to the seed of thy servants; thou hast sworn that the generation of the righteous shall be blessed: vest me with this character, O my God, and fulfil this promise to a worthless creature.

XXXII. *Trust and reliance on the divine promises.*

O LET not my importunity offend thee, for it is the importunity of faith; it is my stedfast belief in

thy word that makes me persist: thy word and thy oath, the two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, give me strong consolation.

It is this that makes me press forward to thy throne, and with confidence lay hold on thy strength, thy wisdom, and thy faithfulness, on thy goodness and tender compassion; those glorious attributes for which the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. It is thy glory to be the confidence of the ends of the earth, and it was long since predicted, "That in "thy name the Gentiles should trust."

Kind Guardian of the world, our heav'nly aid,
To whom the vows of all mankind are paid——

We pay thee the highest homage, and exalt thy infinite attributes by faith and confidence in thee.

I know that thou art, and believe thee a rewarder of them that diligently seek thee. I will never quit my hold of thy promises, there I fix my hopes; I will not let a tittle go, nor part with a mite of the glorious treasure. I humbly hope I have a rightful claim; thou art my God, and the God of my religious ancestors, the God of my mother, the God of my pious father; dying and breathing out his soul, he gave me to thy care, he put me into thy gracious arms, and delivered me up to thy protection. He told me thou wouldst never leave nor forsake me: he triumphed in thy

long experienced faithfulness and truth, and gave his testimony for thee with his latest breath.

And now, O Lord God of my fathers, whose mercy has descended from age to age, whose truth has remained unblemished and inviolable, and whose love remains without decay; O Lord, the faithful God and the true, keeping covenant and mercy to a thousand generations, let me find that protection and blessing that the prayers of my dying father engaged for me: now in the time of my distress, be a present help; and if thou wilt this once deliver me, thou alone shalt be my future trust, my counsellor, and hope; to thee I will immediately apply myself, and look on the whole force of created nature as insignificant. To thee I will devote all the blessings thou shalt give me, my time, my life, my whole of this world's goods; whatever share thou shalt graciously allot me, shall surely be the Lord's.

Oh! hearken to the vows of my distress, and for thy own honour deliver me from this perplexity which thou knowest, and reveal to me the abundance of thy mercy and truth.

It was my dependence on thy promise and fidelity that brought me into this exigence; I staggered not at thy promises through unbelief, but boldly ventured on the credit of thy word: I took it for my security, and can the Strength of Israel re-

pent? Canst thou break thy covenant, and alter the thing that is gone out of thy mouth?

"O God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and the "God of Jacob, this is thy name for ever, and "this thy memorial to all generations;" the God before whom my fathers walked, the God that fed me all my life long till now, and the Angel that redeemed me from all evil, bless me. Let the God of Jacob be my help, let the Almighty bless me; let the blessing of my father prevail above the blessing of his progenitors, to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills.

Bless me according to thy own greatness, according to the unsearchable riches of thy grace in Christ Jesus; he is the spring of all my hope, in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen; he is the true and faithful Witness, and has by his death sealed the divine veracity, and is become surety for the honour and faithfulness of the most high God. To this also the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, bears witness.

Oh! great JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Lord God omnipotent, hear and grant my request, for the glory of thy mighty name, that name which saints and angels bless and love: let thy perfections be manifest to the children of men; let them say, there is a God that judgeth in the earth; let them confess thou dost keep thy covenant with the seed of thy servants, that thy

righteousness is from age to age, and thy salvation shall never be abolished; let them see and acknowledge, that in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children have a place of refuge.

Unshaken as the sacred hill,
And firm as mountains be;
Firm as a rock the soul shall rest,
That leans, O Lord, on thee.

Memorandum.

This act of faith in God was fully answered, and I leave my testimony, that "the name of the Lord "is a strong tower, and he knoweth them that put "their trust in him."

XXXIII. *Application to the divine truth.*

However intricate and hopeless my present distress may be to human views, why should I limit the Almighty? or why should the holy One of Israel limit himself? Nature and necessity are thine: thou speakest the word, and it comes to pass; no obstacle can oppose the omnipotence of thy will, nor make thy designs ineffectual.

Is thy hand at all shortened since the glorious period, when thy mighty power, and thy stretched arm formed the heavens and earth; when these spacious skies were spread at thy command, and this heavy globe fixed on its airy pillars?

The strong foundations of the earth
Of old by thee were laid;
Thy hands the beauteous arch of heav'n
With wondrous skill have made.

"And these shall wax old as a garment, as a "vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall "be changed;" but shouldst thou, like these, decay, where were the hopes of them that confide in thee? If in all generations thy perfections were not the same, what consolation could the race of men draw from the ancient records of thy wonderful works? Why are we told, "thou didst "divide the sea, to make a path for thy people "through the mighty waters;" that thou didst rain bread from heaven, and dissolve the flinty rock in crystal rills, to give thy chosen nation drink?

Thou art he that distinguished Noah in the universal deluge, and preserved the floating ark amidst winds, and rains, and tumultuous billows.

It was thy protecting care that led Abraham from his kindred and his native country, and brought him safely to the promised land.

Thou didst accompany Jacob in his journey to Padan-aram, and gave him bread to eat, and raiment to put on, till greatly increased in substance: he returned to his father's house; he wrestled for a blessing; he wrestled with the Almighty, and prevailed.

With Joseph thou wentest down into Egypt, and didst deliver him out of all his adversities, till he forgot his sorrows, and all the toil of his father's house.

Thou didst remember thy people in the Egyptian bondage, and look with pitying eyes on their affliction; and after four hundred and thirty years, on the very day thou hadst promised, didst release and bring them out with triumph and miracles. Thy presence went with them in a pillar of a cloud by day, and a protecting fire by night; thy conquering hand drove out great and potent nations, and gave them an entire possession of the land promised to their fathers: nor didst thou fail in the least circumstance of all the good things thou hast promised.

What a cloud of witnesses stand on record? Joshua and Gideon, Jephtha and Samson, who through faith obtained promises.

Thou didst command the ravens to feed thy holy prophet, and at the word of a prophet didst sustain the widow's family with a handful of meal.

Thou didst walk with the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace; thou wast present with Daniel in the lion's den to deliver him, because he trusted in thee.

In what instance has the prayer of faith been rejected? Where were the righteous forsaken? Who can charge God, without charging him fool-

ishly? What injustice has been found in the Judge of all the earth? His glorious titles have stood unblemished from generation to generation; nor can any of his perfections decay, or rolling years make a change on the Ancient of days.

Are not his words clear and distinct, without a double meaning, or the least deceit? Are they not such as may justly secure my confidence; such as would satisfy me from the mouth of man, unconstant man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and his foundation in the dust, unstable as water, and fleeting as a shadow? And can I so slowly assent to the words of the Most High? Shall I trust impotent man, that has neither wisdom nor might to accomplish his designs, that cannot call the next breath or motion his own, nor promise himself a moment in all futurity? Can I rest on these feeble props, and yet tremble and despond, when I have the veracity of the eternal God to secure and support me?

I know he will not break his covenant, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail; I dare attest it in the face of earth and hell, I dare stake my all for time and eternity, on this glorious truth, a truth which hell cannot blemish, nor all its malice contradict.

Exert yourselves, ye powers of darkness, bring in your evidence, collect your instances, begin from the first generations since the world was peopled, and men began to call on the name of the Lord;

when did they call in vain? when did the Holy One of Israel fail the expectation of the humble and contrite spirit? Point out, in your blackest characters, the dismal period, when the name of the Lord was no more a refuge to them that trusted in him. Let the annals of hell be produced, let them mark the dreadful day, and distinguish it with eternal triumphs.

In vain you search; for neither heaven, nor earth, nor hell, have ever been witness to the least deviation from truth or justice; the Almighty shines with unblemished glory, to the confusion of hell, and the consolation of those that put their trust in him.

On thy eternal truth and honour, I entirely cast myself; if I am deceived, I am deceived; angels and archangels are deluded too; they, like me, have no dependence beyond the divine veracity for their blessedness and immortality; they hang all their hopes on his goodness and immutability; if that fails, the celestial paradise vanishes, and all its glories are extinct; the golden palaces sink, and the seraphic thrones must totter and fall. Where are your crowns, ye spirits elect? Where are your songs and your triumphs, if the truth of God can fail? A mere possibility of that would darken the fields of light, and turn the voice of melody into grief and lamentation.

What pangs would rise even through all the re-

gions of blessedness; what diffidence and fear would shake the heart of every inhabitant; what agonies surprize them all, could the word of the Most High God be cancelled? The pillars of heaven might then tremble, and the everlasting mountains bow; the celestial foundations might be moved from their place, and that noblest structure of the hands of God be chaos, and eternal emptiness.

But for ever "just and true are thy ways, thou "King of saints; blessed are all they that put their "trust in thee:" for thou art a certain refuge in the day of distress, and under the shadow of thy wings I will rejoice. "My soul shall make her "boast in the Lord, and triumph in his salvation; "I called on him in my distress, and he has deli- "vered me from all my fears."—Hallelujah.

Here I dismiss my carnal hope,
My fond desires recall;
I give my mortal int'rest up,
And make my God my all.

XXXIV. *Glory to God for salvation by Jesus and his blood.*

LET me give glory to God before I die, and take shame and confusion to myself. I ascribe my salvation to the free and absolute goodness of God. Not by the strength of reason, or any natural inclination to virtue, but "by the grace of God I am

" what I am" O my Redeemer, be the victory, be the glory thine. I expect eternal life and happiness from thee, not as a debt, but a free gift, a promised act of bounty. How poor would my expectations be, if I only looked to be rewarded according to those works, which my own vanity, or the partiality of others have called good, and which, if examined by the divine purity, would prove but specious sins? As such I renounce them: pardon them, gracious Lord, and I ask no more; nor can hope for that, but through the satisfaction which hath been made to divine justice for the sins of the world.

O Jesus, my Saviour, what harmony dwells in thy name! celestial joy, immortal life is in the sound.

> Sweet name! in thy each syllable
> A thousand bless'd Arabia's dwell;
> Mountains of myrrh, and beds of spices,
> And ten thousand paradises.

Let angels set this name to their golden harps; let the redeemed of the Lord for ever magnify it.

O my propitious Saviour, where were my hopes, but for thee? How desperate, how undone were my circumstances? I look on myself, in every view I can take, with horror and contempt. I was born in a state of misery and sin, and in my best estate am altogether vanity. With the utmost advantages I can boast, I shrink back, I tremble to

appear before unblemished Majesty. O thou, in whose name the gentiles trust, be my refuge in that awful hour. To thee I come, my only confidence and hope. Let the blood of sprinkling, let the seal of the covenant be on me. Cleanse me from my original stain, and my contracted impurity, and adorn me with the robes of thy righteousness, by which alone I expect to stand justified before infinite justice and purity.

O enter not into judgment with me, for the best actions of my life cannot bear thy scrutiny; some secret blemish has stained all my glory. My devotion to God has been mingled with levity and irreverence; my charity to man with pride and ostentation. Some latent defects have attended my best actions, and those very things which perhaps have been highly esteemed by men, have deserved contempt in the sight of God.

" When I survey the wondrous cross
" On which the Prince of glory died;
" My richest gain I count my loss,
" And pour contempt on all my pride.

" Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
" Save in the cross of Christ, my God:
" All the vain things that charm me most,
" I sacrifice them to thy blood."

April 30. 1735.

XXXV. *A review of divine mercy and faithfulness.*

I AM now setting to my seal that God is true, and leaving this as my last testimony to the divine veracity. I can from numerous experiences assert his faithfulness, and witness to the certainty of his promises. "The word of the Lord is tried, "and he is a buckler to all those that put their "trust in him."

"O come, all you that fear the Lord, and I will "tell you what he has done for my soul: I will "ascribe righteousness to my Maker," and leave my record for a people yet unborn, that the generation to come may rise up and praise him.

Into whatever distress his wise providence has brought me, I have called on the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears: I trusted in God, and he saved me. Oh! let my experience stand a witness to them that hope in his mercy; let it be to the Lord for a praise and a glory.

I know not where to begin the recital of thy numerous favours. Thou hast hid me in the secret of thy pavilion, from the pride of man, and from the strife of tongues, when, by a thousand follies, I have merited reproach. Thou hast graciously protected me, when the vanity of my friends, or the malice of my enemies, might have

stained my reputation. Thou hast covered me with thy feathers, and under thy wings have I trusted: thy truth has been my shield and my buckler. To thee I owe the blessing of a clear and unblemished name, and not to my own conduct, nor the partiality of my friends.—Glory be to thee, O Lord.

Thou hast led me through a thousand labyrinths, and enlightened my darkness. When shades and perplexity surround me, my light has broke forth out of obscurity, and my darkness been turned into noon-day. Thou hast been a Guide and a Father to me. When I knew not where to ask advice, thou hast given me unerring counsel. The secret of the Lord has been with me, and he has shewn me his covenant.

In how many seen and unseen dangers hast thou delivered me! How narrow my gratitude! how wide thy mercy! How innumerable are thy thoughts of love! how infinite the instances of thy goodness! how high above the ways and thoughts of man!

How often hast thou supplied my wants, and by thy bounty confounded my unbelief? Thy benefits have surprised and justly reproached my diffidence. My faith has often failed, but thy goodness has never failed. The world and all its flatteries have failed, my own heart and hopes have

failed; but thy mercy endures for ever, thy faithfulness has never failed.

The Strength of Israel has never deceived me, nor made me ashamed of my confidence. Thou hast never been as a deceitful brook, or as waters that fail, to my soul.

In loving-kindness, in truth, and in very faithfulness, thou hast afflicted me. Oh! how unwillingly hast thou seemed to grieve me! With how much indulgence has the punishment been mixed? Love has appeared through the disguise of every frown: its beams have glimmered through the darkest night. By every affliction thou hast been still drawing me nearer to thyself, and removing my carnal props, that I may lean with more assurance on the eternal Rock.

Thy love has been my leading glory from the first intricate steps of life. The first undesiging paths I trode were marked and guarded by the vigilance of thy love. Oh! whither else had my sin and folly led me?

How often have I tried and experienced thy clemency, and found an immediate answer to my prayers? Thou hast often literally fulfilled thy word. I have a fresh instance of thy faithfulness again. Thou hast made me triumph in thy goodness, and given a new testimony to the veracity of thy promises.

And after all, what ingratitude, what insensibi-

lity, reigns in my heart? Oh! cancel it by the blood of thy covenant. Root out this monstrous infidelity, that still returns after the fullest evidence of thy truth. Thou hast graciously condescended to answer me in my own time and way, and yet I am again doubting thy faithfulness and care. Lord, pity me; I believe, O help my unbelief. Go on to succour, go on to pardon, and at last conquer my diffidence. Let me hope against hope, and, in the greatest perplexity, give glory to God, by believing what my own experience has so often found,—that "the Strength of Israel will not lie, "nor is he a man that he should repent."

While I have memory and thought, let his goodness dwell on my soul. Let me not forget the depth of my distress, the anguish and importunity of my vows. When every human help failed, and all was darkness and perplexity, then God was all my stay. Then I knew no name but his, and he alone knew my soul in adversity. "Bless the "Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his bene-"fits."

"Long as I live, I'll bless thy name,
"My King, and God of love;
"My work and joy shall be the same
"In the bright worlds above."

I have yet a thousand, and ten thousand deliverances to recount, ten thousand unasked-for mercies to recall. No moment of my life has been

destitute of thy care. No accident has found me unguarded by thy watchful eye, or neglected by thy providence. Thou hast been often found unsought by my ungrateful heart, and thy favours have surprized me with great and unexpected advantages. Thou hast compelled me to receive the blessings my foolish humour despised, and my corrupt will would fain have rejected. Thou hast stopped thy ears to the desires which would have ruined and undone me, when I might justly have been left to my own choice, for the punishment of my many sins and follies. How great my guilt! how infinite thy mercy!

Hitherto God has helped, and here I set up a memorial to that goodness which has never abandoned me to the malice and stratagems of my infernal foes, nor left me a prey to human craft or violence. The glory of his providence has often surprised me, when gropping in thick darkness. With a potent voice he said, "Let there be light, "and there was light." He has made his goodness pass before, and loudly proclaimed his name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious." To him be glory for ever. Amen.

XXXVI. *Some daily experiences of the gracious methods of divine providence, to me the least and most unworthy of all the servants of my Lord.*

FIRST WEEK*.

I.

EVERY day's experience reproaches my unbelief, and brings me some new evidence of thy faithfulness. Thou hast dispelled my fears, and, to the confusion of my spirttual foes, thou hast heard the voice of my distress. But a few hours ago, I was trembling and doubting if thou wast indeed a God hearing prayer; and now I have a fresh instance of thy goodness, which, with a grateful heart, I here record. May the sense of thy benefits dwell for ever on my soul.

II.

Thy mercies are new every morning. Again thou hast given me an instance of thy truth. "I "trusted in God, and he has delivered me. I will "love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of "my supplication: therefore will I call on him as "long as I live."

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* Note. *The division of these meditations into sevens by the pious writer, seems to tell us, that these were the devout thoughts of six weeks of her life.*

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III.

"As for my God, his way is perfect; the word "of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all them "that put their trust in him." He has punctually fulfilled the word on which I relied. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

IV.

Thy bounty follows me with an unwearied course; language is too faint to express thy praise. No eloquence can reach the subject. My heart is warm with the pious reflection. I look upward, and silently breathe out the unutterable gratitude, that melts and rejoices my soul. I staggered at thy promise through unbelief, and yet thou hast graciously performed thy words. If we sometimes doubt or faulter in our faith, yet he abideth faithful who has promised.

V.

With the morning-light my health and peace are renewed. The cheering influence of the sun, and the sweeter beams of the divine favour, shine on my tabernacle——Lord, why me? why am I a ransomed, a pardoned sinner?——Why am I rejoicing among the instances of sovereign grace, and unlimited clemency?

VI.

I boasted in thy truth, and thou hast not made me ashamed. My infernal foes are confounded, while my faith is crowned with success.

Oh! who hath tasted of thy clemency,
In greater measure, and more oft than I?

VII.

As the week begun, so it ends with a series of mercy. Language and numbers fail to reckon thy favours; but this shall be my eternal employment.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide thy works no more,
My ever-thankful soul, O Lord,
Thy goodness shall adore.

SECOND WEEK.

I.

"I HAVE seen the goings of God my King, in his "sanctuary;" but O, how transient the view! My sins turned back thy clemency, and yet I can celebrate the wonders of forgiving grace.

II.

What do I owe thee, O thou great preserver of men, for easy and peaceful sleep, for nights unmolested with pain and anxiety?

Thou round my bed a guard dost keep:
Thine eyes are open while mine sleep.

Not a moment slides in which I am unguarded by thy gracious protection.

III.

Thanks be to God, who has given me the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. Thou didst deliver me from the snare of the fowler, the craft and malice of hell, and kept me back from sinning

against thee. Be thine the victory and praise. Hallelujah.

IV.

O Lord God of Israel, "happy is the man that "putteth his trust in thee." I left my burden at thy feet, and thou hast sustained me. My cares are dissipated, my desires answered. "O who is "a God like unto thee, near unto all that call on "thee!"

V.

Thy strength is manifest in weakness. Not unto me, O Lord, but to thee be all the glory.

For ever thy dear charming name
Shall dwell upon my tongue,
And Jesus and salvation be
The theme of ev'ry song.

This shall be my employment through an eternal duration: it is that alone can measure my gratitude. The Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and salvation; he also shall be my song.

VI.

Every day's experience confirms my faith, and brings a fresh evidence of thy goodness. Thou hast dispelled my fears, and, to the confusion of my spiritual foes, hearkened to the voice of my distress.

VII.

I will love the Lord, who has heard my supplications. I made my boast in his faithfulness, and he has answered all my expectation.

THIRD WEEK.

I.

My last exigence will be the closing part of life. Oh! remember me then, my God. Thou who hast led me hitherto, forsake me not at last. Be my strength when nature fails, and the flame of life is just expiring; let thy smiles chear that gloomy hour. Oh! then let thy gentle voice whisper peace and ineffable consolation to my soul.

II.

In six and seven troubles thou hast delivered me, and been a covert from the tempest, a hiding-place from the wind. Hitherto God has helped, and I have dwelt secure. And here I leave a memorial to thy praise, a witness against all my future distrust of thy faithfulness and truth.

III.

Every day of my life increases the sum of thy mercies. The rising and the setting sun, in its constant revolution, can witness the renewal of thy favours. Thou wast graciously present in an imminent danger. By thee my bones have been kept entire, and thou hast not suffered me to dash my foot against a stone.

IV.

" Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is " within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, " O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who

" heals thy diseases, and pardons all thy sins." O thou the great Physician of my body, as well as of my distempered soul, thou hast restored and saved me from death and hell. Blessed Jesus, thou hast " taken my infirmities, and borne my sickness; the " chastisement of my peace was on thee, and by " thy stripes I am healed."

V.

I subscribe to thy truth, O Lord; I attest it in contradiction to infernal malice, to all the hellish suggestions that would tempt my heart to diffidence and unbelief, even against repeated experience, against the fullest evidence of the divine veracity.

I.

Oh! thou who never slumberest nor sleepest, this night! this night thy watchful care has kept me from a threatening danger. Thy eyes were open, while I was sleeping, secure beneath the covert of thy wings.

VII.

Another, and a greater deliverance has crowned the day: I have found thy grace sufficient in an hour of temptation, thy strength has been manifest in my weakness. Thine was the conquest; be the crown and the glory thine for ever. By thee I have triumphed over the stratagems of hell. " Not un- " to me, but to thy name be the praise, O Lord."

FOURTH WEEK.

I.

It is not one of a thousand of thy favours I can record; but eternity is before me, and that unlimited duration shall be employed to rehearse the wonders of thy grace. Then in the great assembly I will praise thee, I will declare thy faithfulness, and tell to listening angels what thou hast done for my soul, even for me, the least in the family, unworthy to wipe the feet of the meanest of the servants of my Lord.

II.

How numberless are thy thoughts of love to my soul! If I should count them, they are more than the sand on the shore: thou hast again reproved my unbelief, and given me a new conviction that my whole dependence is on thee; that second causes are nothing, but as thou dost give them efficacy: all nature obeys thee, and is governed at thy command.

III.

O my God, I am again ready to distrust thee, and call in question thy faithfulness. Oh! how deep has this cursed weed of infidelity rooted itself in my nature, but thou canst root it out.

IV.

Again I must begin the rehearsal of thy mercies, which will never have an end; for thou dost renew the instances of thy goodness to a poor un-

grateful sinner. Thou hast punctually fulfilled the promise on which I depended; thou hast granted the request of my lips, and led me in a plain way that I have not stumbled.

V.

This day I have received an unexpected favour: I doubted the success indeed, but thou hast gently rebuked my unbelief, and convinced me, that all things are possible with thee, and that the hearts of the children of men are in thy hands.

VI.

Whether thou dost favour or afflict me, I rejoice in the glory of thy attributes, in whatever instance thy are displayed. Be thy honour advanced, whether in mercy or justice: I must still assert the equity of thy ways, and ascribe righteousness to my Maker. Yet let me plead with thee, O my God, since mercy is thy darling attribute, O! let me now be exalted; deal not with me in severity, but indulgence; for if thou shouldst mark what is amiss, who can stand before thee?

VII.

Thou dost heal my diseases, and renew my life; thou art the guardian of my sleeping and my waking hours. Glory to my God, whose eyes never slumber.

FIFTH WEEK.

I.

THOU knowest my secret grief, where my pain lies, and what are my doubts and diffikulties. In thy wonted clemency, O Lord, dispel my darkness; leave me not to any fatal delusion, in an affair of everlasting moment. This is my hour of information and practice; beyond the grave no mistake can be rectified; as the tree falls, so it must for ever lie.

II.

Thy goodness still pursues me, O heavenly Father, with an unwearied course; new instances of thy faithfulness reproach my unbelief. I sent up my petition with a doubting heart, and yet thou hast graciously deigned to encourage my weak and staggering faith, which has often wavered and failed, even in the view of the brightest evidences of thy power and truth.

III.

Thou dost often resolve to leave my unbelief without excuse, by renewing the glorious conviction of thy clemency and truth. O let not the unworthiness of the object turn back thy benignity from its natural course.

IV.

How many unrecorded mercies have glided along with my fleeting moments into thoughtless silence, and long oblivion? How prone is my un-

grateful heart to forget thy benefits? or (oh! amazing guilt!) to make an ungrateful return?

V.

Oh! never let my false heart relapse into distrust and unbelief again; thou hast rebuked my folly, and put a new song of praise into my mouth; let those infernal suggestions vanish, that would once object against thy oft-experienced truth. In this I would still triumph, and insult all the malice of hell. A time will come when thou shalt be glorified in thy saints, when thy truth and faithfulness shall appear in full splendour, when the beauty of thy attributes shall be conspicuous, and clear from every blemish that the impiety of men, or the malice of devils, has charged on thy most righteous providence.

VI.

Let me still assert, that the ways of God are perfect justice and truth; I have a fresh instance of thy goodness to boast, and yet my ungrateful heart is even now ready to distrust. The Lord increase my faith: let thy renewed favours silence my unbelief, "to shew that the Lord is upright; he is "my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in "him."

VII.

Teach me your language, ye ministers of light, that I may express my wonder and gratitude. O thou, who canst explain the secret meaning of my

soul, take the praise that human words cannot express; accept these unutterable attempts to praise thee.

SIXTH WEEK.

I.

LET me go on, O most Holy, to record thy faithfulness and truth; let it be engraven in the rock for ever; let it be impressed on my soul, and impossible to be effaced.——What artifice of hell is it that so often tempts me to distrust thee, and joins with my native depravity to question thy truth?

II.

Oh! may I never forget this remarkable preservation: thy gentle hand supported me, and underneath were the everlasting arms. "Thou hast "kept all my bones, not one of them is broken." Thy mercy upheld me, even when it foresaw my insensibility and ingratitude. How does my guilt heighten thy clemency! How wondrous is thy patience, O Lord, and thy rich grace, that only gently rebuked me, when thou mighteset have taken severe vengeance of my sin.

III.

I must again begin the rehearsal of thy love. Thou hast eased my pain, scattered my fears, and lengthened out my days. Oh! may my being be

devoted to thee: let it be for some remarkable service that I am restored to health again.

IV.

I find thy mercies renewed with my fleeting days, and to rehearse them shall be my glad employment. I trusted thee with my little affairs, and thou hast condescended to give me success. Lord, what is man, that thou dost thus graciously regard him? Even my sins, my hourly provocations, cannot put a check to the course of thy beneficence; it keeps on its conquering way against all the opposition of my ingratitude and unbelief; and hast thou not promised, O Lord, it shall run parallel with my life, and measure out my days.

V.

Jesus, my never-failing trust, I called on thy name, and thou hast fully answered my hopes: let thy praises dwell on my tongue, let me breathe thy name to the last spark of life. Thou hast scattered my fears, and been gracious beyond all my hopes: my faint and doubting prayers have not been rejected; but oh! how slow are my returns of praise, how backward my acknowledgments!

VI.

Never have I trusted thee in vain; Lord, increase my faith; confirm it by a continued series of thy bounty; add this favour to the rest, for faith is the gift of God, an attainment above reason or nature. I am now waiting for the accomplishment; Oh!

shew me thy mercy and truth; add this one instance to the rest, and for ever silence the suggestions of hell, and my own infidelity.

VII.

How rooted is this cursed principle of unbelief, that can yet distrust thee after so many recorded instances of thy love! How long will it be ere my wavering soul shall entirely confide in thy salvation? Oh! my God, pity my weakness, give new vigour to my faith, and let me take up my rest in thee for ever.

THE END.

ORIGINAL
POEMS
AND
TRANSLATIONS.
BY
Mr THOMAS ROWE.

——Non haec ſunt edita ab illo;
Sed quaſi de domini funere rapta ſui.
Quicquid in his igitur vitii rude carmen habebit,
Emendaturus, ſi licuiſſet, erat. *Ovid.*

VERSES

TO THE MEMORY OF

Mr THOMAS ROWE.

Occaſioned by Mr Rowe's LIVES *being tranſlated into French by the learned Abbe Bellenger, and publiſhed at Paris and Amſterdam with Monſieur Dacier's tranſlation of Plutarch.*

Nunquam ego, te vita, frater amabilior,
Aſpiciam poſthac! at certe ſemper amabo,
Semper moeſta tua carmina morte legam. *Catull.*

O FRIEND! O Brother! can thy dear-lov'd name
Riſe to my view, nor pious ſorrow claim?
O early fled to thy congenial ſkies,
E'er I could know thy matchleſs worth to prize!
Now ripen'd judgment gives that worth to ſee,
And next a father loſt, I mourn for thee;
For thee whoſe friendſhip had that loſs ſupply'd,
In youth my guardian, and in age my guide.
Thy voice had taught to bend my ſtubborn will,
Lur'd me to good, and warn'd my wiſh from ill.
While Virtue, in thy life to ſight conſeſt,
With heav'nly charms had vanquiſh'd all my breaſt,
With borrow'd vigour I had learn'd to tread
The path ſhe points, by thy example led:
Now, my guide loſt, I trace the arduous way
With feeble ſtep, and ſcarce forbear to ſtray.
O Friend! O Brother!—but why thus again
Will theſe dear names my tortur'd mem'ry pain?
Forever gone, thou wilt not leave the ſkies,

For Friendſhip's wild complaints, or Nature's cries.
Ah! what avail'd with ſtudious toil t' explore
What ancient ſcience taught, or modern lore,
Since not the treaſur'd ſtores of wiſdom ſave
The laurel'd head from the devouring grave!
Yet if, bleſt ſpirit, minds celeſtial know
To joy at honours paid their names below,
Hear Philomela's ſtrains rehearſe thy praiſe,
While ev'ry muſe inſpires the moving lays:
Lays that ſhall laſt, while virtue boaſts to warm
The gen'rous breaſt, or ſacred verſe can charm:
And ſee thy works thro' foreign nations known,
France marks their worth, and makes thy lives her own:
And conſcious of their right to equal fame,
The rival volume joins with Plutarch's name.

THEOPHILUS ROWE.

POEMS, &c.

HORACE, BOOK I. ODE III. IMITATED.

1708.

O Clio, heav'n-born muſe, what happy man,
Or god like hero, ſhall thy well-tun'd harp,
Or pipe ſhrill-ſounding celebrate? Or if
A loftier theme delight thee, ſay what God
Shall Echo, pleaſing babler, taught by thee,
Sing in the ſhades of Helicon, or Pind',
Or Hæmus' ſacred mount? where Orpheus, ſkill'd
In arts maternal, liſt'ning rivers ſtopt
In their ſwift courſes, lull'd the winds to ſilence,
And made the ſtubborn oaks attentive move
To aukward dances their unwieldy limbs.
Where better can the pious muſe begin,
Than with the univerſal Father's praiſe?
Who rules the pow'rs above, and men below,
The earth's wide plains, the ſea's unbounded waves,
And laws to all the vaſt creation gives,
With undiſputed ſway; himſelf ſecure
Of own'd pre eminence; nor equal knows,
Nor aught that may deſerve a ſecond place.
Yet Pallas next our adoration claims;
Immortal maid, in arts and arms ſupreme:
Bacchus, the ſoft amuſer of our cares,
With India's conqueſt proud: Diana, foe
To beaſts untam'd: Apollo, tuneful God;
Able alike to give the wretched life

By potent herbs, and villains certain death
By never-erring darts, command our lays.
  Nor ever ſhall the grateful muſe forget
Alcides, matchleſs hero; nor the Twins,
Whom Leda bore to Jove: this ſkill'd to tame
The fiery courſer, this in fight untam'd;
Both by the mariners rever'd: for ſoon
As their auſpicious ſtar adorns the ſkies,
The foaming waters trickle from the rocks,
The winds retire in whiſpers; blackeſt clouds,
That erſt portended ſtorms, divide, and leave
A pleaſing day, and ev'ry threat'ning wave
(So will the Gods! ſo unreſiſted fate!)
Sinks to a calm, and ſleeps upon the ſeas.
  What next forbids to ſing Britannia's chiefs,
In war and peace illuſtrious? Brutus firſt,
Sire of the nation; Egbert, pow'rful prince,
Source of a thouſand kings: Normania's duke,
An eaſy, and a rightful conqueror
Of realms his own; or ſhall I thoſe record,
Who born beneath a throne, to diſtant climes
Extended Britain's Glory, and their own?
Talbot, a name ſtill dreaded by the Gaul:
Warwick, ſure puniſher of perjur'd kings,
Who play'd with crowns, and toſs'd the gilded trifles
To whom he pleas'd, deſpiſing them, as far
Beneath his own acceptance. Dev'reux, long
By great Eliza favour'd, loſt at laſt
By wiles of ſtateſmen, and heroic crimes.
Who can enough, or Vere, or Ca'ndiſh praiſe?
Or Drake, Iberia's ſcourge? him poverty
Paternal, and a youth inur'd to hardſhips,
Fitted for vaſt exploits, and taught to gain,
By merit, honours fortune had deny'd.
Thro' ev'ry age the Ruſſels' patriot race
Riſes in fame. The bright Naſſovian ſtar

Shines with tranſcendent ſplendor, and excels
All leſſer lights, as Phœbe thoſe of heav'n.
Father and Guardian of the human race,
Offspring of Saturn, who by fate's decree
Diſpoſeſt Anna's deſtiny; preſerve
Thy precious charge, extend her glorious ſway.
May ſhe acknowledge thee alone ſuperior,
Nor have on earth an equal: if ſhe drives
From her realm's limits the invading Gaul,
Or on the hoſtile land due vengeance takes,
Haughty in well-got ſpoils; ſtill under thee
May ſhe in mildneſs happy nations rule.
Do thou Olympus with thy chariot ſhake;
Then juſtly on thy foes and ours, incens'd,
Dart forked lightning, make deſtruction ceaſe,
And bleſs the ſinking world with laſting peace.

TIBULLUS, BOOK I. ELEGY iii.

While you, Meſſala, with your warlike train,
In haughty triumph plow the ſubject main,
Me my hard fate in realms unknown detains,
Thro' all my frame a dire diſtemper reigns,
And very hardly life itſelf remains.
O could my prayers obtain a ſhort reprieve!
Would the grim tyrant a kind reſpite give!
I have no mother here to cloſe my eyes,
And grace with pious tears my obſequies;
No ſiſter, who in looſe, diſhevel'd hair,
And all the pomp of deſolate deſpair,
Should ſhed rich ſpices at my ſepulchre:
Nor Delia 's there, whoſe preſence could create
Health and new life, each raging pain abate,
And reconcile my ſoul to all the ills of fate.

She, e'er I went, ſought ev'ry pow'r above,
And ev'ry pow'r ſeem'd gracious to her love;
All ſpoke a ſafe return, yet ſtill ſhe fear'd,
And tender anguiſh in her looks appear'd;
Tears from her eyes in briny torrents fell,
And ſighs, in riſing, choak'd her laſt farewell.
I too oft' ſought pretexts for my delay;
Foul birds and baleful omens ſtopt my way,
Or ſtars averſe, or Saturn's luckleſs day.
Oft' I return'd, a longer time to wait,
Mov'd by ill-boding ſtumblings at the gate.
Taught by my harms, let men with caution move,
Nor tempt the wrath of unconſenting love.
What is thy Iſis, Delia, now to me?
Or what the fruit of thy vain piety?
What have I gain'd from all thy widow'd nights,
Giv'n all to her, and ſtoln from our delights?
Yet, Goddeſs, ſave! exert thy healing pow'r,
And to loſt health a ſinking wretch reſtore!
That Delia may before thine altars bow,
Perform in pious gratitude her vow,
And oft', with hair unbound, in artful lays,
Among thy Pharian crowd, may chaunt thy praiſe;
When I to my poor houſehold gods return,
And monthly incenſe to my *Lares* burn.
O for that age of innocence again,
That bleſt the world in good old Saturn's reign!
E'er the diviſions of the earth were known,
Or men for foreign lands, deſpis'd their own.
While the tall pine yet on the mountain ſtood,
The ſafe, unenvy'd monarch of the wood,
Nor yet cut down, and taught on ſeas to brave
The rage of ev'ry wind, and ev'ry wave:
For yet no mariner, for ſordid gain,
Diſturb'd the quiet of the wat'ry reign.

The ox, unyok'd, might thro' the paſtures ſtray;
Nor the tough bits taught horſes to obey.
No doors ſecur'd the houſes yet, nor bounds
To private uſe confin'd the fruitful grounds.
Soft honey from the ſolid oaks diſtill'd:
The ſheep, that rang'd unguarded o'er the field,
Unſought, to ev'ry hand their ſwelling dugs would yield.
No thirſt of empire, no ambitious rage,
Nor fell debate, taught mortals to engage,
Nor broke the calm repoſe that bleſt the peaceful age.
Now, under Jove, reign Rapine, Slaughter, Hate,
And wars, and ſtormy ſeas, and thouſand forms of Fate.
O ſpare, great Sire! I never falſly ſwore,
Blaſphem'd thy awful name, nor dar'd thy pow'r.
But if the fatal deſtin'd hour is come,
Be this inſcription plac'd upon my tomb:
" While number'd with *Meſſala's* martial train,
" The toils of land, and dangers of the main
" *Tibullus* prov'd; by early Fate oppreſt,
" Beneath this humble tomb his aſhes reſt."
But me, love's Queen, her ever faithful ſlave,
Will ſtill protect, and cheriſh in the grave;
She bleſt me living, and will guard me dead,
And to th' Elyſian fields her conſtant vot'ry lead.
Bright ſcene of endleſs bliſs! where feather'd throngs,
With ſlender throats repeat melodious ſongs.
Th' unlabour'd meads ſpontaneous Caſſia bear;
And purple roſes flouriſh round the year.
Join'd with ſoft nymphs, the ſhepherds dance and play,
And ſport a glad eternity away.
Mirth and gay joys reign o'er the bliſsful ſpace,
And youth immortal ſmiles in ev'ry face.
Unhappy lovers, by ſtern fortune's hate,
And the rough hand of unrelenting fate,
Snatch'd ſudden from their joys, are doubly bleſt,
With myrtle wreaths diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt.

Far from theſe regions of unmix'd delight,
Hid in thick ſhades of everlaſting night,
Are the dire manſions and ſevere abodes,
Sacred to Vengeance and infernal Gods:
Round the ſad ſeats ſulphureous waters roar,
Vaſt Cerb'rus barks before the brazen door;
Tiſiphone, with ſnaky treſſes crown'd,
Laſhes the flying criminals around,
And with the dreadful noiſe the gloomy caves reſound.
Ixion there, whoſe inſolence durſt move
To impious fires the royal bride of Jove,
Fix'd on his reſtleſs wheel, while endleſs years
Purſue their courſe, the whirling vengeance bears.
Tityus extended o'er nine acres lyes,
And daily food to rav'nous birds ſupplies:
And Tantalus, with ſeeming plenty curſt,
Sees waters court his lips, yet dies for thirſt.
There juſtly ſuffer Danaus' curſed race,
The horror and the hate of all the diſmal place;
Who braving love, and Hymen's ſacred rites,
Could ſlay their huſbands on their nuptial nights!
There may the wretches howl, who e'r they be,
Who wiſh'd ill-fortune to my loves and me;
That I might from my Delia wander far,
Thro' all the hardſhips of a tedious war!
But thou, my love, thy conſtancy retain,
And true to me, and thy own vows remain;
In ſafe retirement my long abſence mourn,
Nor form a wiſh for joy, till I return.
Let thy old faithful nurſe be ever by,
The ancient guardian of thy chaſtity;
Whoſe tales may chaſe the ling'ring ſhades away,
And lull thy ſorrows 'till the dawning day,
Sudden I'll come, as to thy wiſhes giv'n,
And ſent by ſome ſtrange miracle from Heav'n;

Then thou, my Delia, with an haſty pace,
Run unadorn'd and looſe to my embrace.
When, when, ye pow'rs, will that bright morning riſe,
To paint with livelier red the eaſtern ſkies,
Which ending all my griefs and dire alarms,
Shall give my Delia to my longing arms,
Propitious Heav'n, all obſtacles remove;
And let me die, at leaſt, with the dear nymph I love!

AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

Written in the Spring 1710.

While pious Anna's conqu'ring arms
Fill pow'rful guilt with juſt alarms,
Which now ſhall ſoon make diſcord ceaſe,
And bleſs the jarring world with peace;
While ſaucy prieſts ſedition prate,
Arraign the Queen, embroil the ſtate,
And murmur at they know not what:
Thou, Daphnis, by kind fate ſent down
From the wild tumults of the town,
Doſt in a happy rural ſeat,
Taſte the pure joys of calm retreat.
Nature, with blooming honours gay
And vernal ſweets, invites thy ſtay.
See the fair morning of the year
In all its richeſt pomp appear!
See the briſk ſongſters of the air
To the forſaken woods repair!
Hear them in artleſs harmony
Welcome back the ſpring and thee!
Baniſh'd from the charming plains,
No more the ſluggiſh ſeaſon reigns:

But ah! the ſad deteſted gueſt
Still keeps its empire in my breaſt;
For in the abſence of the fair,
Doubt, anguiſh, jealouſy, deſpair,
Make an eternal winter there.
Daphnis, to whom by gentle Heav'n
The bliſs I languiſh for is giv'n,
Who all thoſe beauties canſt admire,
That ſet my longing ſoul on fire,
And gaze on thoſe bewitching eyes,
For whoſe dear light poor Strephon dies,
And thoſe tender accents hear,
Which wound the heart and charm the ear;
Gaze not on thoſe eyes too long,
Nor liſten to her tempting tongue,
Leſt all thy ſoul their influence prove,
And friendſhip yield to mightier love.
Call all that friendſhip to thy aid,
And tell, oh! tell the lovely maid,
With all thy eloquence and art,
What racking ſorrows rend my heart:
Tell her, how I waſte away
In never-ceaſing moans the day;
Waſte in woes the tedious night,
Yet curſe the dull, ungrateful light,
That brings not Delia to my ſight.
Each ſun with fainter beams appears,
Tho' ev'ry breaſt but mine it chears;
And 'till from her my ſoul receive
The joys that ſhe alone can give,
While all things ſmile around, I grieve.
To her—But ah! I aſk in vain
Thy aid to tell my am'rous pain,
Tho' none with nicer judgment knows
To paint diſtreſs, and talk of woes.

Can artful tales my griefs expreſs?
Ev'n moving numbers make them leſs.
Not all the muſes can inſpire,
Not the great God that tunes the lyre,
With all his force and all his fire;
Not even her own immortal lays,
Sacred to glory and to praiſe,
And of eternity ſecure,
Can paint the torments I endure,
O could the charming maid but know
Part of the pains I undergo,
Pains to none but lovers known,
And gueſs my ſuff'ring by her own!
Ye verdant plains, ye flow'ry hills,
Ye little, gently, murm'ring rills,
Ye peaceful ſhades and ſilent groves,
Scenes of ſoft reſt and rural loves,
Say, for you beſt her ſecrets know,
And oft have heard her tuneful woe,
Is the bright charmer ever kind?
Is Strephon always in her mind?
Does ſhe not teach the rocks my name?
On wounded barks inſcribe her flame?
To the attentive bending boughs,
Whiſper a thouſand am'rous vows?
Chide the dull lagging hours away,
And in ſoft ſighs accuſe my ſtay?
Zephyrs bear the charmer's ſighs,
Waft them gently to the ſkies;
Hear them ye little Gods of love,
And all ye awful pow'rs above,
In your own regiſters record
Each am'rous vow, and melting word;
That firm, unſhaken they may be,
As the ſtern laws of deſtiny,

And the dear paſſion may remain
Fix'd as your own eternal reign.
  Daphnis, deareſt youth, excuſe
The roving tranſports of the muſe;
If, while fantaſtic joys ſhe feigns,
To eaſe her real, mighty pains,
Joys too glorious to conceive,
Too vaſt to hope, or to believe,
Unmindful for a while ſhe be
Of ſacred friendſhip, and of thee.
Friendſhip's holy link, that binds
In ſtricteſt ties the nobleſt minds,
My grateful ſoul ſhall never break:
For thee a thouſand vows I make,
And for thy bliſs, my conſtant care,
I tire the gracious Gods with pray'r.
  Thro' all thy life may'ſt thou poſſeſs
Uninterrupted happineſs;
Serene may ev'ry ſun ariſe,
To light thee to ſucceſſive joys;
May ev'ry hour glide ſmooth away,
And ſmiling as a ſummer's day.
No anxious thoughts diſtract thy breaſt,
And no unpleaſing dreams infeſt
Thy downy ſleep and ſilken reſt.
Whene'er thou lov'ſt, be light thy chain,
And gentle thy fair tyrant's reign;
Soft and melting may ſhe be,
Artleſs, innocent, and free;
And in one word, to ſum the reſt,
That thou may'ſt be completely bleſt;
In mind, in form, in mien, and air,
As near with Delia to compare,
As Heav'n can make another fair.
  Ye Pow'rs, (if any Pow'rs there be,
That mind ſo mean a wretch as me)

From your exalted ſtations hear,
And liſten to my humble pray'r.
Your choiceſt gifts on Anna ſhed,
Deck with freſh laurels Marlbro's head;
Let the vaſt minds that guide the ſtate,
Be without crimes or envy great:
In lower ſpheres my wiſhes move,
I aſk no other bliſs but love.
Let ſullen ſtars refuse to bleſs
My meaner aims at happineſs;
Let envious fortune blaſt my toil,
And all things frown, if Delia ſmile.
Tremble, mean ſouls, when lightnings fly,
And thunders rend the diſtant ſky,
Secure the riſing ſtorm I'll wait,
And crave the malice of my fate:
Only let the tender fair
Eaſe the ſuff'rings I muſt bear,
With gentle pity cure my ſmart,
Appeaſe each horror in my heart,
Indulge my hopes, allow my fires,
And own the paſſion ſhe inſpires;
While I eternal vows repeat,
And die in raptures at her feet.
Pardon, Daphnis, ſtill I rove;
Whatever ſubject I would prove,
Still I return to her, and love.
Delia's my everlaſting theme,
My waking thought, my nightly dream:
For her alone I touch the ſtring,
For her in artleſs numbers ſing;
I neither court, nor hope the bays,
Too bleſt, if ſhe accept my lays,
Pity the weak unable muſe,
And what ſhe cannot praiſe, excuſe.

Thou too, my friend, content receive
The wretched preſents I can give.
The feeble muſe unpractis'd ſings
In humble notes of humble things.
Perhaps when the black ſtorms blow o'er,
When the waves gently kiſs the ſhore,
And wars and tumults are no more;
When peace with balmy wings ſhall ſmile,
And brood auſpicious on our iſle;
My ſoul with the bright proſpect fir'd,
With nobler warmth ſhall be inſpir'd,
With new-born ſtrength ſhall dare to riſe,
And in bold flights attempt the ſkies;
Paint all the gay tranſporting ſcene,
And ſing the Hero, and the Queen:
Then with juſt fires, and loftier lays,
I'll ſpeak my friendſhip, and thy praiſe:
Great as thy theme my force ſhall be,
And all my numbers worthy thee.

DAVID'S LAMENTATION OVER SAUL AND JONATHAN.

Offspring of Iſrael, by peculiar grace
Diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of human race,
With ſplendid names and haughty titles proud,
Fav'rites of Heav'n, the choſen ſeed of God;
Too bleſt while Saul your conqu'ring armies led,
And Jonathan commanded at their head;
With a long train of ſhining glories crown'd,
The envy and the dread of all the nations round
Now preſs'd beneath a loſs without relief,
And only great and eminent in grief;
In all the pomp of moving ſorrow come,
To pay vain honours at your prince's tomb.

Your beauty and your glory loſt deplore;
The great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.

Let all mankind the glorious dead bemoan,
From pole to pole be wide the ruin known.
Ye gentle ſtreams, with your kind waves diffuſe
Throughout the realms you bleſs, the diſmal news,
And bid th' unbounded waters, as they flow,
Convey to worlds unknown the mighty woe.
Winds, that in tempeſts Heav'n s juſt wrath declare,
And you that in ſoft murmurs fan the air,
In all your fleeting courſes thro' the ſky,
Bear on your wings our loſs, and ſpread it as you fly:
Only of Gath and Aſcalon beware,
Nor whiſper out the fatal ſecret there;
Leſt the deteſted race, our ancient hate,
Hear the ſad ſound, and triumph in our fate.
Ah! 'tis in vain, the long untaſted joys
Already fill their minds with glad ſurpriſe,
Glow on their cheeks, and ſparkle in their eyes.
The vile idolaters the temples crowd,
With coſtly ſpices ev'ry altar load;
And while the ſky's obſcur'd with fragrant ſmoke,
Their ſenſeleſs fancied deities invoke,
Their impious madneſs openly proclaim,
And loud blaſpheme th' unutterable name.
With niceſt art, the unbelieving fair
Give a new luſtre to each tempting air,
Point ev'ry dart, and level all their charms,
To win ſome haughty warrior to their arms,
O'er ſome great chief an eaſy conqueſt gain,
And drag the conqu'ror in a willing chain.
The barb'rous poets tune their loftieſt lays,
To reach in aukward notes the victor's praiſe;
In artleſs numbers celebrate the day,
And boaſt of vict'ry and of Gilboa.

Gilboa! curſt mount! thou ever hated ground,
To after-times by our defeat renown'd!
No more on thee let ſacred incenſe riſe,
Perfume the neighb'ring plains, and glut the greedy ſkies:
No more on thee let gentle dews deſcend,
Nor heav'n of fruitful ſhow'rs the ſuccour lend;
The deſart earth nor fruits, nor herbage know,
But all be wild and barren as our woe!
Since upon thee our princes fell, the ſhield
Vilely abandon'd on thy guilty field!
Thou ſaw'ſt the dreadful ruin we deplore;
On thee the great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.
O Saul! O Jonathan! illuſtrious pair!
How great! how good! how excellent you were!
In peace our only pleaſure and delight,
Our only ſafety and defence in fight!
Philiſtia oft' has felt Saul's mighty hand,
Scatt'ring wide deſolation o'er the land;
Nor leſs the force of Jonathan has mourn'd,
Whoſe ſword ne'er empty to his ſheath return'd;
But deeply ſtain'd, and glutted well with gore,
The nobleſt and the beſt the hated nation bore.
Leſs ſwift the eagle bears his prize away,
Leſs fierce the lion rends his panting prey.
Alike their ſkill, alike their matchleſs art,
To twang the far-reſounding bow and dart
The never-erring jav'lin to the heart:
Alike they dar'd, and fought, and overcame,
The ſame their martial fire and thirſt of fame;
Ah! that their hapleſs end ſhould alſo be the ſame!
That hapleſs end we ever muſt deplore,
The great are fall'n the mighty are no more.
Ye num'rous fair that Iſrael's court adorn,
Above the reſt, your prince, your monarch mourn;
For yours he was, ſtoop'd to your pow'r alone,
Your pow'r that only could exceed his own.

How was he pleas'd when he from conqueſt came,
Crown'd with freſh laurels and eternal fame,
A fair, a radiant circle to behold,
Clad in rich ſilk, and proud in pompous gold!
Who ſtopt the noiſy triumph in its way,
And made the greateſt ſplendor of the day;
Who in ſoft numbers, and melodious lays,
Made Heav'n's wide arch reſound the conqu'rors praiſe,
And by the charming muſic of their tongue,
Added new glories to the deeds they ſung;
Who with kind love could ſoften all his care,
And more than recompence the ſullen toils of war.
How have you ſtrove t' avert the fate we mourn!
Aſcending ſpices on each hill did burn,
And Heav'n was tir'd with vows for his return.
In vain, alas! you vow'd, in vain you pray'd,
In vain your unavailing off'rings paid;
Heav'n, by your crimes incens'd, refus'd your pray'r,
And bade the wanton winds diſperſe it in the air.
At leaſt, lament the prince you could not ſave,
Shed a ſoft tear in pity on his grave;
Suſpend a while the conqueſts of your eyes,
And in true woe and unaffected ſighs,
Pay your laſt homage at his obſequies;
The vaſt, the univerſal loſs deplore;
The great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.
But my wild grief no limits e'er ſhall know,
Who to the public join a private woe:
Ne'er till my ſorrows with my life ſhall end,
I'll ceaſe to mourn my brother and my friend.
O Jonathan! like thee none ever knew
To pay a debt to ſacred friendſhip due?
'Tis not in words nor numbers, to expreſs
Thy vaſt, thy unexampled tenderneſs.
Not the ſoft maid, but lately taught to prove
The wild diſorders of unruly love;

Though the fierce paſſion reigns throughout her frame,
And all her ſoul is melting in the flame,
E'er felt a love like that which thou haſt ſhewn,
Soft as the tender ſex, and manly as thy own,
Yet thou art fall'n, alas! no more to riſe,
And death's cold ſleep ſits heavy on thine eyes.
Howe'er, thy name ſhall live, the world ſhall know
What to thy honour'd memory I owe:
To all the wond'ring people I'll rehearſe
Thy deathleſs glories, in no vulgar verſe.
Thou in the firſt and nobleſt rank ſhalt ſtand
Of conſtant friends, a rare, but ſhining band!
Where'er unhappy virtue meets renown,
Where'er the name of love or friendſhip's known,
Thou ſhalt be ever ſung; taught by my lays,
Old men ſhall ſigh, and infants liſp thy praiſe,
And ev'ry age and nation ſhall deplore
The great men fall'n, the mighty now no more.

TO DAPHNIS. AN EPISTLE.

DAPHNIS, among my deareſt friends approv'd,
And more by me than thy own muſes lov'd,
Whoſe parts mature in Nature's early bloom,
Give certain hopes of miracles to come,
Of tender eloquence, and gentle lays,
And females crown'd with everlaſting bays:
To thee I ſing, than whom none more can know
From a ſoft lyre what heav'nly numbers flow.
Thou ſcorn'ſt with me thoſe brutes, who rudely wiſe,
The whole creation's faireſt part deſpiſe; (eyes:
Thou too haſt felt their pow'r, and own'd their conqu'ring
Thou too, with me, wilt humble altars raiſe,
Nor blame my theme, nor envy at my praiſe.

Oft' have the muſes their own ſex inſpir'd,
And with a more than mortal ardour fir'd,
Taught them in wit and numbers to excel,
Nor yield to man alone the praiſe of writing well.
Corinna rivall'd Pindar's nobleſt lays,
And gain'd by merit the conteſted bays.
Old Greece the charming Sappho did adore,
And hardly boaſted in her Homer more:
Still with her fires the love ſick virgins burn;
Her lays they ſing, her tender griefs they mourn;
Still celebrate her love and her deſpair,
And curſe the villain that betray'd the fair.
Of all the nymphs the Roman empire bore,
When great Auguſtus held the ſov'reign pow'r,
None could Sulpitia equal, ſhe alone
Of Beauty and of Wit could claim the throne;
With ev'ry grace and ev'ry muſe adorn'd,
A thouſand ſlaves ſhe made, a thouſand ſcorn'd,
And in wild fires for coy Cerinthus burn'd:
He only her ſoft meaſures could inſpire,
For him ſhe ſung, for him ſhe tun'd her lyre.
Long ſince Death ended the fair tyrant's reign;
Now not the ruins of her charms remain;
Devouring time has moulder'd all away,
Nor left one atom of diſtinguiſh'd clay:
Yet ſtill the charmer in her verſe ſhall live,
And ſhall to all eternity ſurvive;
Still in her lays immortal beauties ſhine,
And kindle love and fire in every line.
Britain, next Greece and Italy renown'd
For artful ſongs, a diff'rent fortune found.
When ancient Chaucer in unpoliſh'd verſe
Did wond'rous tales with wond'rous art rehearſe;
When Spenſer in a myſtic Fairy ſcene,
Proclaim'd the glories of the Virgin Queen;

When the great Shakeſpeare charm'd the liſt'ning Stage,
With Juliet's ſoftneſs, and Othello's rage;
When ſurly Ben with nicer judgment writ,
And bore from Greece and Rome the prize of comic wit,
No females could aſpire to equal praiſe:
Then men alone poſſeſs'd the envy'd bays,
With haughty majeſty unrival'd ſhone,
Nor fear'd a ſhe-pretender to the throne.
At laſt ('twas long indeed) Orinda came,
To ages yet to come an ever-glorious name;
To virtuous themes her well tun'd lyre ſhe ſtrung,
Of virtuous themes in eaſy numbers ſung.
Horace and Pompey in her lines appear
With all the worth that Rome did once revere;
Much to Corneille they owe, and much to her:
Her thoughts, her numbers, and her fire the ſame,
She ſoar'd as high, and equall'd all his fame;
Tho' France adores the bard, nor envies Greece
The coſtly buſkins of her Sophocles.
More we expected, but untimely death
Soon ſtopt her riſing glories, with her breath.
In her youth's prime the charming virgin dy'd:
Aſtræa well Orinda's place ſupply'd.
Phœbus did ne'er before a breaſt inſpire
With larger portions of poetic fire:
On ev'ry ſubject ſhe her art could prove,
Well on each ſubject ſung, but beſt of love;
At once ſhe ſung, and felt the pleaſing ſmart,
Love in her numbers reign'd, and lorded in her heart.
With what amazing force the charmer writes
Of the dear paſſion and its fierce delights!
Leſs tender fires the Cyprian goddeſs moves,
Leſs ſoft the am'rous cooings of her doves.
Warm'd by her moving lays, the cruel fair
Learn to put on a more relenting air,
Indulge their lovers hopes, and pity their deſpair:

Chill age is fir'd to unaccuſtom'd heats,
The curdling blood a vig'rous courſe repeats,
And ev'ry pulſe with youthful ardour beats.
O! had chaſte tranſports fill'd her youthful mind,
And to permitted pleaſures moſt inclin'd,
Sappho had yielded to her nobler fame,
And only Philomel's had been a brighter name.
But while too oft' her guilty fancy roves
To looſe deſires, and wild, diſorder'd loves;
Unheeded minds with lewd ideas warms,
And gives adultery and inceſt charms;
The good and chaſte abhor the vicious lays,
And hate the beauties they are forc'd to praiſe.
Goddeſs of harmony, thy ſuccour bring,
While I thy darling, Philomela, ſing!
In vain I call, nor hears the Muſe my pray'r,
Hurry'd away by winds, and loſt in air:
Nor, did ſhe hear, would aught her aid avail,
Beneath the mighty theme all numbers fail;
All numbers flag beneath her, but her own;
She is ſufficient to herſelf alone.
Heav'ns! how ſhe charms! how graceful is her mien!
Her countenance, how like her mind ſerene!
Youth's livelieſt bloom, a never-fading grace,
And more than beauty ſparkles in her face.
How ſoon the willing heart her empire feels!
Each look, each air, each melting accent kills.
Yet the bright form creates no looſe deſires;
At once ſhe gives, and purifies our fires,
And paſſions chaſte as her own ſoul inſpires:
Her ſoul, Heav'n's nobleſt workmanſhip, deſign'd
To bleſs a ruin'd age, and ſuccour loſt mankind,
To prop abandon'd virtue's ſinking cauſe,
To ſnatch from vice its undeſerv'd applauſe,
To lead in piety's forſaken ways,
By bright example, and celeſtial lays.

With what high tranſport, in thoſe lays we find
Expreſs'd the image of her godlike mind!
How ſmooth her ſtrains! how eaſy flow her lines!
Throughout the whole, how vaſt a genius ſhines!
Whate'er ſhe writes, in ev'ry part we ſee
Aſtræa's fire, Orinda's purity;
And while her greater glories we admire,
Leſs pure's Orinda's verſe, leſs fierce Aſtræa's fire.
If ſhe deſcribes the youthful conqu'ror's charms;
That gave her liberty unknown alarms;
If of the faithleſs Theron ſhe complains;
And, fill'd with juſt reſentment, breaks her chains;
Our ſouls with her begin, and ceaſe to love,
And ev'ry paſſion learns from her to move:
Or if ſhe rather tries the rural lays,
And in a country dreſs immortal charms diſplays,
Our ſouls th' enchanting ſounds tranſported hear,
Nor Mantua now, nor Sicily prefer:
With her we ſeek the deſolate abodes,
The ſimple manſions of the ruſtic gods;
We ſhun the city, and we court the woods.
If ſhe with Taſſo ſings the Chriſtian chief,
Who, ſent by Heav'n to a loſt realm's relief,
While hell and helliſh men in vain withſtand,
Freed from baſe ſervitude the Holy Land;
Or in a ſofter and more melting ſtrain,
Repeats thro' ev'ry grove, and ev'ry plain,
The conſtant paſſion of the Faithful Swain;
Unnumber'd beauties in each part we view,
And graces Italy itſelf ne'er knew;
Other tranſlations we faint copies call,
But what ſhe writes is all original.
But when in more exalted lays ſhe brings
A pious off'ring to the King of Kings,
Not purer ſweets Sabæan hills ſupply,
Or with more grateful odours glad the ſky.

The ſeraphs hover in the ambient air,
Nor think a mortal form inhabits there;
Amaz'd, a while they leave the ſtarry throne,
To ſee on earth ſo pure devotion ſhewn,
And wonder at a ſtrain ſo very like their own.
Daphnis, dear youth, to whom propitious Heav'n
A kind retreat from noiſe and cares has giv'n,
Near the calm ſeat, pure ſtream, and verdant ſhade,
Bleſt by the preſence of the matchleſs maid;
Content enjoy the bleſſings of thy fate,
Pity the wretches who are curſt and great.
Let the proud Gaul for boundleſs ſway contend,
'Till with his life his dire ambition end;
'Tis more than empire to be Singer's friend!
O would hard fortune, which has fix'd me down
To the deteſted hurries of the town,
Relenting, change my hapleſs deſtiny,
Grant ſome few lucky hours, and make me bleſt like thee?
I'd to the charming ſolitude repair,
There wait a glad attendant on the fair,
There on her lovely lips with tranſport dwell,
And catch each tender accent as it fell;
'Till new-inform'd, and kindled from her eyes,
Sure ev'n my grov'ling ſoul, at length, ſhould learn to riſe.
Then in each grove, near ev'ry purling ſtream,
Bright Philomel ſhould be my conſtant theme;
In numbers like her own the nymph I'd praiſe,
And equal the vaſt ſubject with my lays.
The Sylvan gods to hear my notes ſhall throng,
And ſilent rivers liſten to my ſong;
To all the hills, and vales, and groves around,
The babling echo ſhould repeat the ſound,
And Amaryllis's ſelf be leſs renown'd.

AN EPISTLE TO CLIMENE.

Imitated from the French of M. Des Houlieres.

Still muſt we mourn your abſence, ſtill complain,
And court you from your ſad retreat in vain?
When teeming earth, with fruitful moiſture fed,
Brings forth new flow'rs to deck the paths you tread;
When each returning morn ſhines doubly bright,
And each cool ev'ning brings a charming night,
The country ſhades may yield a ſoft delight:
But when o'er all the ſavage winter reigns,
Makes bare the groves, and deſolates the plains;
When nature's face is chang'd, and ev'ry day
Snatches ſome poor, decaying charm away,
'Tis downright madneſs, Climene, to ſtay.
What new unheard-of pleaſures can you find?
What ſtrange delights to entertain your mind?
Or do important reaſons force your will,
And to the gloomy ſcene confine you ſtill?
I gueſs the mighty cauſe: You fear to prove,
In this vile town, the dreadful thing call'd Love.
The little tyrant reigns amidſt the ſport,
The ſmiles and pleaſures of the town and court:
Nor only there, him ev'n the wilds obey,
And country deſerts own his awful ſway.
In vain to woods and ſolitudes we fly,
In vain the city change for purer ſky;
More dang'rous ev'n than courts, the ſhades may prove,
And with more eaſe admit th' invader love.
Wild was the place, and ſavage all around.
Where fair Angelica young Medor found;
Severe the dame, and grave, and ſternly coy;
Am'rous, and ſoft, and tender was the boy:
You know the reſt.—Then haſte from your abodes,
Leave the weak ſhelter of the fields and woods;

O come, and in a thouſand breaſts inſpire
Succeſsleſs rage, and unavailing fire!
Nor dread th' effects of all their treach'rous arts,
Their boaſted ſtratagems to conquer hearts;
Unleſs the Fates aſſiſt, their moving tale
Will never o'er your native cold prevail.
To prove this true, believe the tale I tell,
Not oracles more ſacred truths reveal.

As wand'ring penſive thro' the ſilent groves,
I meditate my ſorrows and my loves,
Daphnis, the terror of our woods, I view;
A mightier name love's empire never knew:
None e'er ſo well a haughty breaſt could tame,
Or warm to fires unknown the coldeſt dame.
Proſtrate before a heedleſs fair he lyes,
Sheds fruitleſs tears, and waſtes a thouſand ſighs;
Then love and ſorrow pleading in his look,
Thus to the cruel nymph the charmer ſpoke:

How long, my fair, will you your fate delay?
Still will you idly waſte the precious day,
And in indifference loiter life away?
Hear always with contempt my tender theme,
Deſpiſe love's pleaſures, and his pow'r blaſpheme?
Ah, no! the joys my paſſion courts in vain,
An[illegible]her ſhepherd with more eaſe will gain:
His happier flame will your fierce pride remove,
Subdu[illegible]your ſtubborn heart, and melt it all to love.
All nature owns the God: in barb'rous plains,
Wher[illegible]alf the year is night, and cold eternal reigns,
[illegible] frozen race is warm'd to ſoft deſires,
[illegible]feels in ev'ry vein the genial fires.
[illegible]ever diſtant, the dread hour muſt come,
[illegible]ll your fading beauties will reſume:
[illegible] a juſt revenge, the offended boy
[illegible]ve his ſuff'rings, and withhold his joy;

Send a freſh warmth, as ev'ry charm decays,
And wild deſires, you want the pow'r to raiſe.
Ah, nymph! the horror of this fate prevent;
Appeaſe the angry God, and yet in time repent.
Let taſteleſs age th' ecſtatic bliſs deſpiſe,
Grow coldly grave, and ſtoically wiſe;
Do you, my fair, while blooming youth invites
To warmer ſentiments, and gay delights,
Your ſcorn and dull indiff'rence diſpoſſeſt,
Receive the gentle tyrant to your breaſt:
Reward a conſtant flame, and yield to prove
The mighty tranſports of a mutual love:
No other ſolid bleſſings mortals know,
Nor Heav'n can on its fav'rites more beſtow,
To give a taſte of its own joys below.

He ceas'd. The neigh'bring echoes caught the ſound,
The little birds ſung tender notes around;
The liſtening waves in gentle murmurs move,
And ev'ry balmy Zephyr whiſper'd love:
Yet her cold heart in ſilence heard his pain;
When the heart's ſilent, all things ſpeak in vain.

THE CAPRICE.

From the ſame.

Near a pure ſtream, beneath a cooling ſhade,
Charming retreat! the penſive Iris ſtray'd;
Iris, a name to diſtant nations known,
By her ſam'd verſes' beauties, and her own:
Heedleſs ſhe rov'd; for, not the murm'ring ſound
Of the ſmooth waves, nor flow'rs that deck the ground,
Nor the birds tender ſongs could charm the fair,
Or eaſe her gloomy thoughts, and melancholy care.
At laſt ſhe cries, Fond love, I own no more
Thy awful tyranny, and boaſted pow'r;

No more thro' thee tumultuous fears ariſe,
Pain my torn breaſt, and ſwell my ſtreaming eyes;
A native coldneſs reigns in ev'ry part,
And all is calm and quiet in my heart:
But ah! how poorly I that calmneſs taſte,
Forc'd to regret ev'n all my ſuff'rings paſt!
Alas! the unwary ſoul but little knows,
That wiſhes for the bleſſings of repoſe;
In the ſad ſtate of idleneſs and eaſe,
When nothing buſies, nothing too can pleaſe.
The treach'rous tyrant, Love, leſs faintly charms,
Sweet are his ills, and pleaſing all his harms:
The mind each moment to delight improves;
For all is pleaſure to a heart that loves.
In what a tedious round of griefs he lives,
Who, wretched, his own tenderneſs ſurvives?
Can one who ever felt an am'rous pain,
Unloving life's vexatious load ſuſtain?
Loſe ev'ry ling'ring hour, and waſte away,
In dull, unactive indolence the day?
Ah no! return, ſoft God, reſume thy reign,
Bring all thy fires to kindle mine again——
Alas! thou wilt not come, and all my calls are vain.
Cruel! thou cam'ſt an uninvited gueſt,
And mad'ſt, unſought, a paſſage to my breaſt:
Now thou canſt all my pray'rs and vows deſpiſe,
And ſcorn to gain a weak inglorious prize.
I aſk not for the tranſports thoſe poſſeſs
Whom thou, with ſmiling fates, and mutual loves doſt bleſs.
The barb'rous, charming youth that rul'd my heart,
Has taught me all thy rigour, and thy ſmart;
Heedleſs of mine, in other flames he burns,
And hate, or worſe indifference, returns.
The joy of being lov'd I ne'er can prove;
I aſk no other now, but that of love.

Have not my fears and my alarms been vain?
How am I ſure that I have broke my chain?
Don't I, while I deſire, already feel the pain?
What ſhall I do? what method take to find
The true condition of my floating mind?
See, while I ſpeak, the dear ungrateful come!
His preſence clears my doubts, and fixes all my doom.
I view the lovely ſwain; his ſight inſpires
Soft melting thoughts, and raging fierce deſires,
And all my ſoul conceives the well-known fires.
Welcome, ye boundleſs griefs, and racking pains!
Welcome, ye ne'er to be forgotten chains!
Amidſt confuſion, horror, and deſpair,
Studious I'll feed the dear diſtracting care,
And thank thee, gracious Love, that well haſt heard my prayer.

PINDAR'S ODE TO PROSERPINE. ‖

Tranſlated from the French of M. DE LA MOTTE.

INSCRIBED TO THE REV. MR JOHN RUSSEL.

I.

BRIDE of the gloomy king, whoſe awful ſway
The dreadful realms of night obey,
By unrelenting fate at laſt
Upon thine empire I am caſt,
The dreary banks of Styx I've paſt:
'Tis time my faithful ſhade ſhould pay
The tributary verſe I owe,
And what above I promis'd, give below.

‖ *As an incorrect copy of this Ode has been printed under the name of another gentleman, who pretends not only to have corrected ſeveral errors, but to have really written many lines in it; it is abſolutely neceſſary, in juſtice to Mr Rowe, to aſſure the public that they are indebted to that editor for no more than two lines, and the alteration of a few words in this poem; and that (excepting the removal of one or two expletives) it is now publiſhed exactly as the Author wrote it.*

Goddeſs, liſten to thy praiſe,
Liſten to no vulgar lays,
Fix'd in dumb attention hear
The nobleſt ſounds that ever reach'd thine ear.
Not the fam'd Thracian bard, ¶ who bold by love,
Could change relentleſs deſtiny,
And ev'n thy ſoul to tender ſoftneſs move,
E'er touch'd the lyre ſo well, or ſtrain'd a note ſo high.
Leſs than my charming numbers pleaſe
The treach'rous † muſes of the ſeas;
Tho' with an art unerring, they
The liſt'ning mariners betray:
In vain before their eyes they view,
Deluded wretches their own death purſue;
The death they would not wiſh to ſhun;
Charm'd to the ſoft delicious fate they run,
And long to be themſelves ſo pleaſingly undone.

II.

Typhœus, whoſe vaſt bulk and monſtruous pride
Omnipotence itſelf defy'd,
By ſad experience taught to know
Th' unbounded force of an almighty foe,
Under all Sicily oppreſt,
Feels hills, and plains, and realms lie heavy on his breaſt.
Oft' ſtruggling yet, he moves the ground;
Fierce Ætna vomits ſulph'rous ſmoke,
And cities ſink beneath the ſhock,
And his wide priſon trembles all around.
The God of darkneſs trembled too;
He fear'd leſt op'ning earth admitting light,
With dazzling terrors and affright,
Should fill the pale inhabitants of night,
And his dire ſecrets ſhow to public view:
While the bright God would with his piercing ray
Invade th' eternal gloom, and ſcatter boundleſs day.

¶ *Orpheus.* † *The Syrens.*

III.

With careful haſte the frighted god
ſits the upper air, and gains
The fertile Syracuſian plains,
And Pergus' banks made bleſt by thy abode.
There quickly all his anxious fear
A ſofter paſſion did remove,
And turn'd his ſtubborn ſoul to love:
Illuſtrious triumph of thine eyes!
In one ſhort moment he draws near,
He ſees, he loves, he bears away the prize.

IV.

O dear companions of my virgin joys!
O mother dearer than them all!
O all ye kindred deities!
And thou, great Sire, the ruler of the ſkies,
Haſte to my aid, and ſave me when I call!
Vain regrets, and fruitleſs cries!
The earth divides to make the monarch way:
And ſoon the ſad Tartarian ſhore
With wond'ring joy receives the beauteous prey,
Its happy lord from injur'd Ceres bore.

V.

Heav'ns! what wild cares her ſoul oppreſt!
What rage her breaſt inſpires!
See! in Ætnean furnaces
She lights avenging fires.
Unhappy iſland! deſolated plain!
Fruitful and promiſing in vain!
Thou ſaw'ſt her raging hand
Burn riſing crops, a grateful load,
Spread wide deſtruction o'er her favourite land,
And ruin all the bleſſings it beſtow'd.

VI.

Cold, dull reaſon, hence! begone!
A noble madneſs ſeize my mind,

Tranſports to vulgar breaſts unknown;
Wild and roving be my fire,
My numbers looſe and unconfin'd,
As when above I charm'd, and touch'd th' audacious lyre.
I would not pleaſe by artful lays;
Let others curious gardens praiſe,
Their nice exactneſs does but tire my ſight,
And leſs than happy chance delight:
I love the foreſt's waſte retreat,
Where all's irregularly great;
Where Nature, uncorrected, unſupply'd,
Profuſely laviſhes her bounteous pride,
The foreign aids of ſervile arts diſdains,
And beauteous in her own diſorder reigns.

VII.

Goddeſs, all thy power muſt own,
All muſt bend before thy throne:
Pious pray'rs may move the ſkies,
And angry Jove is pleas'd with ſacrifice;
But nor pray'rs, nor piety,
Nor ſacrifice preſerve from thee.
The ſons of art, with fruitleſs care,
The tott'ring building may repair;
Quickly the feeble ruins ſink away,
And moulder into common clay;
Themſelves to yield at laſt, and thy ſtern force obey.
Thetis, who ſtudious her great ſon to ſave,
Doom'd long before to fall at Troy,
Dipt him all o'er in Styx's wave,
Yet left a place for Fate, and mourn'd the daring boy.

VIII.

How num'rous are the worlds of dead,
That o'er thy vaſt domain are ſpread!
New nations every moment land,
And cover all the ſpacious ſtrand.
The ſtubborn deſtinies no mercy ſhow;

All mankind ('tis Fate's decree,
And fix'd as Fate itſelf can be)
Muſt people the dark realms below.
Grandeur, courage, learning, wit,
To thy reſiſtleſs laws ſubmit;
The king and beggar ſhare an equal doom;
The mightieſt conquerors muſt come,
To join the crowds they vanquiſh'd, in the tomb.
Vainly, tuneful bards, ye ſtrive
To gain that immortality you give;
In vain you ſeek to ſhield your deſtin'd head,
In vain by meaner worth would ſave
Your ſinking carcaſe from the grave;
Dare ye to hope for life, when Pindar's ſelf is dead?

IX.

Inexorable Queen, thy force proclaim,
In ſullen majeſty maintain
Thy dreaded, univerſal reign,
Nor own imperial Juno's greater name.
Only my verſe ſhall with thy pow'r engage,
Dare all thy might, and brave thy feeble rage;
My verſe, which, ſpight of Fate, and thee,
Shall pleaſe to all eternity.
Let Gods averſe, and hoſtile pow'rs
Level with earth Thebes' lofty tow'rs;
Still the more laſting notes I ſung,
My country's ruin ſhall ſurvive,
And rev'renc'd even by foes ſhall live,
Charm ev'ry ear, and dwell on ev'ry tongue.

X.

But hark! what ſounds are theſe I hear?
What other muſic wounds my ear?
Heav'ns! 'tis Corinna ſings! too well I know
The rival lyre, and lovely, conqu'ring foe.
Ah! 'tis too much, inſulting maid!
To hope a ſecond triumph o'er my ſhade;

No longer thou in thoſe bright charms canſt truſt,
Which forc'd ev'n rev'rend age to be unjuſt;
Thy pow'rful eyes no longer plead thy cauſe,
Prevent all cenſure, and ſecure applauſe.
See, while I ſpeak, thy weakneſs all appear!
Only the vulgar dead, a nameleſs throng,
About thee croud, and liſten to thy ſong;
While all th' illuſtrious ſhades my numbers hear.
Orpheus, who firſt inſpir'd the vocal lyre,
Homer, the Grecian muſe's fire,
And the gay § Teian bard attend my lays;
And by their ſilence beſt proclaim my praiſe.

XI.

My charming muſic can aſſuage
The triple-headed monſter's rage;
Gentle at my feet he lies,
No longer threatens with his eyes;
And all his ears are buſy on the notes
That ſtop the yelling of his idle throats.
Here Siſyphus, with endleſs toil oppreſt,
Leans on the unmoving ſtone, and ſhares a pauſe of reſt;
Fix'd on my voice, there the dire † Siſters lie,
Their empty veſſels ſtand neglected by.
Ev'n the ſtern Minos, for a while,
His rugged viſage ſoften'd to a ſmile,
Puts off the judge, and yields to give
The trembling criminals a ſhort reprieve.
The Fates, that never pity knew,
Are ſoften'd into pity too;
And negligent to cut the tender thread,
Rob hell awhile of its appointed dead.
See! ev'n the Furies liſt'ning ſtand,
And on my ſongs intent,
Forget the care of puniſhment;
And each avenging whip drops gently from their hand.

§ *Anacreon.* † *The Belides.*

XII.

Thus, Ruſſel, in the ſhades below,
The godlike Theban tun'd his lyre;
While the ſad ghoſts th' inchanting ſounds admire,
And unknown pleaſures fill the realms of woe.
Alas! in vain I would thy judgment cheat,
Thou ſeeſt thro' all the thin deceit;
Thou ſeeſt my trifling rage, and counterfeited fire.
O! were my ſoul, like thine, poſſeſt,
Of all the nobleſt treaſures of the Eaſt;
Could there in each well poliſh'd line
Appear a genius as refin'd as thine;
Were all my verſe like thy juſt language ſtrong,
And ſoft as when thy moving tongue
Charms ev'ry paſſion of th' attentive throng;
My daring muſe ſhould never fall
Beneath its vaſt original;
Like the Dircæan ‖ ſwan I'd nobly riſe,
Spurn the dull earth, and ſoar above the ſkies:
The diff'rence ev'n by thee ſhould ſcarce be known,
And the great bard himſelf my equal numbers own.

AN ODE. TO DELIA.

I.

ETERNAL God, whoſe awful pow'r
The trembling ſeraphs own;
When proſtrate low before thy throne,
With cover'd faces they adore,
And ſing thro' all the vaults above,
The wonders of thy grace, and glories of thy love:
How vaſt the pleaſures! how intenſe!
That from thy throne in living torrents roll;

‖ *Pindar.*

How well they raviſh ev'ry ſenſe,
And fill up all the ſoul!
Where happy minds repos'd in thy embrace,
Unveil'd before the ſplendour of thy face,
And in ineffable delight,
Feaſt on thy love, and on thy ſight
Thro' all eternity employ
Their pow'rs ſublime, and equal to their joy.

II.

Fain would the humble muſe aſpire,
And to celeſtial tranſports tune her lyre,
But, ah! in vain her ſtrength ſhe tries,
Feeble and faint, ſhe dreads the ſkies,
And ſinks the more, the more ſhe ſtrives to riſe.
My ſoul too ſinks, as well as ſhe,
Forgets its own immortal pedigree,
Forgets the ſkies, its native ſeat,
And grov'ling low in duſt and clay,
Heedleſs of aught divinely great,
It waſtes the precious hours away,
In joys that fly as ſwift as they.
The ſinful fleſh, a heavy load,
Drags down the bright, immortal part,
Weakens its pow'rs, and fixes all the heart
Far from its heav'n, and from its God!
Terreſtrial objects ev'ry rapture move,
For them alone it learns to love,
For them with eaſe neglects the diſtant joys above.

III.

Delia, whom propitious Heav'n
The ſofteſt cure for my worſt ills has giv'n;
To end in wand'ring thro' life's tedious road,
To baniſh horror and deſpair,
Tear from my heart each wildeſt care,
And lighten more than half its load;

Look down with pity on my ſtate,
And help, as you compaſſionate.
Thou art my only hope below:
Where'er I ſtand, where'er I go,
'Tis all inchanted ground;
Temptations ev'ry where abound,
And ſnares, and baits, and darkneſs all around.
Inciting Vice, with fatal charms.
Tempts me from Virtue's noble toils,
To her deſtructive arms:
With what a grace the ſyren ſmiles!
How fair her painted face!
Eager I gaze myſelf away,
Long her bewitching dictates to obey,
And ruſh to mis'ry in the ſoft embrace.
Thou art my guide, and if thou lead,
Ev'n yet, perhaps, I Virtue's paths may tread,
Trace without fear the bright, but toilſome way:
If thou neglect thy care, infallibly I ſtray.
Thus, if a poor, benighted traveller
Sees in the gloomy ſkies one friendly ſtar,
He bleſſes the auſpicious light;
Then thro' the horrors of the night,
With cautious ſteps, purſues his doubtful way,
And patient waits the ſlow approach of day.

IV.

How ſtrange, alas, my frailties be!
I find temptations ev'n in thee:
Diſſolv'd in bliſs, and melting in thy arms,
I looſe the reliſh of celeſtial charms;
On thee alone my wand'ring thoughts employ,
And loſt in thee, forget ſuperior joy.
O thou, whoſe unreſiſted ſway
My wildeſt paſſions ſtill obey!
Uſe all thy pow'r, each baſer thought controul,
Raiſe juſt deſires, and regulate my ſoul;

Inſtruct my feeble fancy to conceive
Joys above all that earth, or thou canſt give.
O couldſt thou to my frozen breaſt inſpire
One ſpark of thy own heav'nly fire;
That I too might th' immortal tranſports know,
And more than taſte a paradiſe below!
Scarce the bright cherubs, or the bleſs'd above,
A more celeſtial ardour prove,
Scarce all their harps, and all their lays,
Their great Creator better praiſe,
Or reach in loftier notes the triumphs of his

V.

Whene'er I read the moving lines,
Where well expreſs'd the lofty ſubject ſhines,
I ſee the joys I ſhould purſue,
And all the ſkies are open'd to my view:
Hail, happy realms! divine abode!
Hail, manſions worthy your creator, God!
And can a mortal then poſſeſs
A place in your bright palaces?
Who could refuſe, ſuch glories to obtain,
A few ſhort hours of toil or pain?
The marty'rs gain'd you thro' a bloody way:
Sure I could dare as well as they;
With vig'rous zeal in Virtue's cauſe engage,
And ſtem the torrent of a vicious age,
Inchanting Vice no more my ſoul ſhall warm;
I ſee the fiend reveal'd in open light:
Heav'ns! how the hideous form offends my ſight!
Amaz'd I ſhrink away, and wonder ſhe could charm.
How ſoon the noble warmth's decay'd!
How ſoon the gen'rous raptures fade!
I ceaſe to read; and now they are no more,
And I grow faint and wretched, as before.
O help me ſtill! let the great theme you've ſung
Still entertain your thoughts, and dwell upon your tongue;

Whene'er I ſink, whene'er I fall,
Attempt the heav'nly ſtrain,
Again my ſpirits to juſt heights recall,
Touch ev'ry ſprightly ſtring and raiſe my ſoul again.

VI.

So may pure joys crown each returning day,
Soft be thy nights, and ev'ry dream be gay;
Roll ſmooth each hour, thy breaſt no trouble prove,
But the kind, gentle cares of mutual love!
So long may thy inſpiring page,
And bright example bleſs the riſing age;
Long in thy charming priſon mayſt thou ſtay,
Late, very late, aſcend the well-known way,
And add new glories to the realms of day!
At leaſt, Heav'n will not, ſure, this pray'r deny;
Short be my life's uncertain date,
And earlier long than thine the deſtin'd hour of fate!
Whene'er it comes, may'ſt thou be by,
Support my ſinking frame, and teach me how to die;
Baniſh deſponding nature's gloom,
Make me to hope a gentle doom,
And fix me all on joys to come;
With ſwimming eyes I'll gaze upon thy charms,
And claſp thee, dying, in my fainting arms;
Then gently leaning on thy breaſt,
Sink in ſoft ſlumbers to eternal reſt;
Without a groan reſign my breath,
Nor ſhrink at the cold arms of death;
The ghaſtly form ſhall have a pleaſing air,
And all things ſmile, while Heav'n and thou art there.

VII.

Now of immortal crowns poſſeſt,
Humbly adoring with th' inferior bleſt,
I'll leave each mortal care below;
Only my love for thee ſhall ne'er a period know.

Whenever ſtorms are threat'ning, I'll be near,
Avert the danger, and prevent thy fear;
Oft' mingle with the bright deſcending throngs,
And learn from thine to raiſe my ſongs.
Then, when thou muſt at laſt reſign to Fate,
On thy departing ſoul I'll wait,
With ſtudious pleaſure guide my fair
Thro' the firſt paths of bliſsful air;
Then, led by thee, purſue a loftier road,
To upper regions daring ſoar,
Vaſt realms of bliſs unknown before,
Heav'n's inmoſt palaces explore,
And bear th' enjoyment of a ſmiling God.
New pow'rs, new graces ſhall adorn my mind,
Almoſt like thine exalted and refin'd:
My flame ſhall with my ſtrength improve;
While we a tuneful off'ring bring,
(For taught by thee I too ſhall ſing)
And bleſs thro' endleſs years the Fountain of our love.

AN ODE ON LIBERTY.

I.

BRIGHTEST offſpring of the ſkies,
Great ſource, from whence to hapleſs mortals flow
Pleaſure ſincere and noble joys,
And ev'ry real bleſſing left below,
Immortal Liberty! to thee
The tribute of my voice I bring;
Goddeſs, accept the diſproportion'd praiſe,
Accept the well-deſigning lays,
Mean and humble tho' they be,
And wrong the mighty theme they ſing:
Others may better plead thy glorious cauſe,
By loftier ſtrains, ſecure of juſt applauſe;

But none could e'er admire thy beauties more,
Or with a purer zeal at thy bleſt ſhrine adore.

II.

Of his own image thee, the nobleſt part,
To new-born man th' Almighty gave;
Thee deep infix'd within his heart,
The principle of all that's good and brave.
And well on earth thy dictates were purſu'd,
When ſhining with unſullied grace
His work the pleas'd Creator view'd,
And bleſt a well-deſerving race,
Bleſt the riſing golden age;
Too ſoon, alas! it ceas'd, ſucceeded impious rage:
And vile, degenerate men deſerv'd to be
Hated to Heav'n, and ignorant of thee.

III.

To endleſs ages be the monſter curſt,
That baniſh'd thee from nations firſt!
Who for fond notions of unbounded pow'r,
(Heav'n's right alone) deſpis'd a lawful ſway;
Could think it great to ruin and devour,
And force unwilling wretches to obey.
Nor leſs reproaches load his head,
Be he the ſcorn of all th' illuſtrious dead!
Who firſt could live and be a ſlave,
With ſervile awe could bear unbroke
On his baſe neck the galling yoke;
Nay more, (ye Pow'rs) could bleſs the tyrant's reign,
Submit with pleaſure to his fate,
Praiſe the dire ills of arbitrary ſtate,
Thy ſacred name blaſpheme, and hug the hated chain.
How far unlike thoſe ſouls that, form'd
Of purer mould, of more celeſtial clay,
By thy great rules had all their boſoms warm'd,
And made impatient of unequal ſway,

Were born in happy climes above the reſt
Of loſt abandon'd men, by thy bright preſence bleſt!
O Goddeſs! could I feel but half the fire
That caus'd the deathleſs actions I admire,
Thro' which unmov'd thy vot'ries ſtood
Still true to honour, and to thee,
Eſpous'd thy cauſe, and laviſh of their blood,
Run thro' a thouſand certain deaths, to ſet their country free?

IV.

I'd ſing their deeds, and ſing thy praiſe,
In ſuch vaſt, ſuch lofty lays,
That not alone the neighb'ring hills around,
But heav'n's wide arch ſhould echo to the ſound;
Tyrants ſhould hear the moving ſtrain;
Tyrants, in nations yet unknown,
Should ſcatter bleſſings from the throne,
And try the pleaſures of a gentle reign;
And crowds of ſenſeleſs ſlaves again;
Strange miracle! ſhould turn to men.

V.

All other ſuccour I refuſe;
My glorious theme, be thou alone my muſe!
The humbleſt bard, if thou inſpire,
Shall touch the ſtring, and tune the lyre
And kindle to a more than mortal fire;
With forces not his own ſhall riſe,
Leave far the airy Alps below,
And mountains rev'rend with eternal ſnow,
And ſoar, with daring flight above th' inferior ſkies.

VI.

Unjuſtly we Apollo praiſe,
Author of verſe, and God of lays;
Nor he to Linus did his art infuſe,
Nor Orpheus learn'd it from his parent muſe:
Can aught or great or charming be,
That knows another ſource than thee?

By thee the firſt of poets taught,
(Whom Heav'n a great deliv'rer gave,
Iſrael's favourite ſons to ſave),
Sung the ſtupenduous miracles he wrought:
He ſung a race by long oppreſſion broke,
And ſunk beneath the curſt Egyptian yoke,
Set free, and led from out the barb'rous land,
By ſigns ſurpaſſing faith, and Heav'n's extended hand.
Yet ſo deliver'd, that they ſeem to be
Abandon'd to more certain miſery;
They view the raging ſea before,
With angry billows laſh the ſhore;
Their foes more dreadful, urge behind,
And eager on their prey, outſtrip the wind.
In vain your chariots and your hoſt purſue,
Almighty vengeance flies more ſwift than you.
The ſea retir'd with joyful haſte,
While thro' its depths the Hebrews paſt;
Yet with more joy turn'd back its waves,
T' o'erwhelm the tyrant, and his herd of ſlaves.

VII.

Thine too the numbers, when his awful tongue
Call'd heav'n and earth to liſten to his ſong,
To hear a tale, a ſight to view,
Strange beyond thought, beyond example new:
A people proud by Heav'n's protection made,
Secure amidſt ſurrounding troops of foes,
Thro' wilds unknown and trackleſs deſerts led,
To victory, to freedom, and repoſe:
To whom the rocks gave water, bread the ſkies;
And ev'ry ſlighteſt want found ſure ſupplies
From never-ceaſing prodigies;
Baſe and ungrateful, murmur'd ſtill,
Scorn'd to be ſav'd againſt their will,
Mourn'd in warm tears their broken chain,
And wiſh'd for nauſeous ſlavery again.

Well, wretches! you ſhall quickly prove
The bleſſings of the ſtate you love;
Soon will your crimes the Heav'ns provoke
To curſe you with a foreign yoke.
Then your repentant grief and ardent pray'r,
Will reach yon azure vault, and ev'ry God that's there;
The Pow'rs will lend a pitying ear,
The Pow'rs, tho' much incens'd, will hear:
Commiſſion'd heroes ſhall ariſe,
Arm'd with the vengeance of the ſkies;
Whoſe righteous force ſhall the loſt nation ſave, (gave.
And make fierce tyrants, in their turn, feel all the woes they
Th' event confirm'd his words; of peace poſſeſt,
Weaken'd by luxury and reſt,
By Heav'n abandon'd, by themſelves betray'd,
They fell an helpleſs prey to all that durſt invade
Then great deliv'rers to their reſcue came;
A ſhining liſt, each glorious name,
Worthy of Liberty and Fame!

VIII.

Begin my Muſe, with Ehud's praiſe,
Ehud claims the nobleſt lays;
His ſingle and unaided hand
Freed, by one daring ſtroke, the land:
He (ſhrink, uſurpers, as you hear!)
Free from danger as with fear,
Attack'd a tyrant on his throne,
And reach'd his life, yet ſav'd his own.

IX.

The laurels gain'd near Kiſhon's ſtream
By Deborah, be next thy theme.
To make the Hebrew matron juſtly known,
Requires ſuch numbers as her own:
But who, like her, can terribly delight,
Paint the dire horrors of th' amazing fight,

All heav'n's artillery diſplay,
And ſet the ſtars embattel'd in array?

X.

What wonders troops, tho' deſpicably few,
Engag'd for freedom, and by heroes led,
'Gainſt mighty crowds of ſlaves can do,
Let Midian's vanquiſh'd armies tell,
Who by the ſword of Gideon fell,
Or from his terrors fled.
Happy the chief in num'rous conqueſts won!
Happy in all the ſofter joys of peace!
Happy in ſev'nty males, a large increaſe!
Yet more unhappy in a tyrant ſon!
The hated product of a lawleſs flame,
Stain to his blood and ruin to his name:
For whom all Iſrael curſt him more,
Than for his pious care they e'er had bleſt before.

XI.

Abimelech, by crimes unknown,
Aſcended to the guilty throne;
By crimes unknown he fix'd his pow'r,
Three whole years, a tedious age!
Iſrael felt the monſter's rage.
Heav'n and earth could bear no more:
Proſtrate and grov'ling on the ground he lies,
Deſpair and horror in his dying eyes;
By a vile woman reach'd, his curſt deſigning brain,
Mix'd with the clotted gore, beſmears th' illuſtrious plain.
Go! by thy brother's blood begin thy ſway,
By envious murders blacken ev'ry day,
All human and all ſacred laws defy,
And wake the ſleeping juſtice of the ſky;
Then, full of honour, to the ſhades deſcend,
And to the envying ghoſts relate thy glorious end!
Thus, thus, ye Pow'rs, conclude all impious ſtate;
May none that match his crimes e'er ſhare a nobler fate!

XII.

Sing Jephtha next, my Muſe; if verſe can crown
Deſerving heroes with renown,
The brave, th' unhappy ſhall be ſung,
Fix ev'ry liſt'ning ear, and dwell on ev'ry tongue.
The chief, with Ammon's ſons in fight engag'd,
When with uncertain force the battle rag'd,
Thus ſuppliant vow'd: If by my hand,
Peace and ſafety glad the land;
To you, ye ſov'reign Pow'rs, that bleſs
My righteous arms with wiſh'd ſucceſs,
Whatever firſt meets my return,
Upon your altar ſlain ſhall burn.
Heav'n heard; and Conqueſt hov'ring in the ſky,
Flew to the juſter ſide, the ſervile ſquadrons fly.
His only hope, a nymph divinely fair,
Ran with ſwift joy to meet her doom;
To bid the gen'ral welcome home
From the rough toils of war.
Heav'ns! what a ſight! can words, can lays expreſs
Th' unbounded woes, th' extent of wretchedneſs?
Griev'd, yet reſolv'd, he view'd the charming maid,
And his dire vows with ſtrict obedience paid.
See to the ſhrine the lovely victim bound!
A thouſand loſt adoring youths around
Shrink at the ſtroke, and faint beneath the wound;
The father dropt a tender tear;
But ſoon reflecting on what Heav'n had done,
And freedom ſettled by the conqueſt won,
He check'd his raſh complaint, nor judg'd the prize too dear.

XIII.

Whate'er in fables daring Greece
Boaſts of her Theſeus, and her Hercules,
In Samſon Iſrael view'd, and bleſt
The gift of Heaven employ'd to give them reſt.

Witneſs his ſtrength, ye thouſands ſlain
By him, unarm'd on Lehi's plain!
Witneſs, ye maſſy gates, he tore,
And on his ſhoulders a light burthen bore!
O! had he ſtill been true to Freedom's cauſe,
And never felt a meaner care,
Unrival'd then had been his juſt applauſe,
Nor Iſrael's annals known a name ſo fair;
But he to luſtful fires a prey,
In a deceitful harlot's arms,
Heedleſs of Virtue's deathleſs charms,
Idly conſum'd the precious day.
Juſtly he loſt the ſtrength th' immortals gave
Not for ſuch uſe, juſtly was made a ſlave:
With freedom too depriv'd of ſight,
Waſted in ſervile works, the conſtant jeſt
Of barb'rous foes, and ſport of ev'ry feaſt;
Doom'd by his woes to heighten their delight.
His ſuff'rings move the ſkies; his force returns,
And all the hero with new vigour burns.
'Twas a great feſtival, and crowds reſort;
Collected nobles fill the ſpacious court;
The Hebrew captive's call'd, to finiſh all the ſport.
He comes, the crowd the roofs with clamours rend;
He graſps the ſolid pillars in his hand,
Beneath the graſp the ſolid pillars bend,
Down ſinks the pond'rous pile, and cruſhes half the land.
The conqu'ror fell amidſt the ſlain,
And, dying, ſav'd a wretched race in vain;
Unus'd, and undeſerving to be free,
They ſoon abandon'd dear-bought Liberty,
Choſe the vain ſplendour of a lawleſs throne,
And fix'd their children's ruin, and their own.

XIV.

Greece, with hoſpitable care,
Receiv'd and bleſt the flying Fair:

But Athens moſt ador'd her charms,
Athens renown'd in arts and arms.
Nor leſs the Goddeſs lov'd the grateful place;
There moſt ſhe choſe to fix her ſeat,
There ſtudious form'd a godlike race,
And minds divinely great.
Yet there a ‖ tyrant roſe, with treach'rous arts
Well fitted to ſeduce the people's hearts;
With ſoothing charms to force their ſenſe away,
And make their liberties an eaſy prey:
Gentle his rule; but heroes juſtly free
Know no gentle tyranny.
Twice baniſh'd, he as oft' return'd,
And free-born ſouls the gilded bondage mourn'd.
In peace he dy'd: unequal to the weight,
His ſons in ſullen rigour rule the ſtate:
Not long; for ſoon a choſen band,
With well-concerted plots conſpire
To ſend the tyrants to their ſire,
And eaſe the groaning land.
Lexna, eminent above the reſt,
Deck'd in ſuperior glories ſtands confeſt.
To the great theme, ye Muſes, tune your lays,
Nor bluſh to ſing the glorious harlot's praiſe;
Known be her praiſe, but in oblivion ly
All her former infamy!
What tho' her fatal beauties could entice
From virtue's manly joys to the ſoft bane of vice!
Lull heedleſs youth in wanton eaſe,
And make the gay perdition pleaſe!
Poſterity ſhall think her crimes undone,
And nothing real, but the fame ſhe won.
Ariſtogiton lov'd the dame;
Ariſtogiton, moſt renown'd of thoſe
That vow'd deſtruction on their country's foes;
He lov'd, yet not abandon'd to his flame,

‖ *Piſiſtratus.*

Lov'd Athens more: oft' in her arms
He ſigh'd for freedom's nobler charms:
Oft' mighty vengeance would his thoughts employ,
Diſturb his looſer hours, and interrupt the joy.
The fair herſelf at laſt was warm'd,
And with new fire her hero arm'd,
Bleſt his deſign, and taught him in her turn
To court brave death, and ſhameful life to ſcorn.

XV.

† One tyrant falls; ſtern Hippias ſtill ſurvives,
And for his brother's ſeeks his murd'rers lives;
Some prove his rage, but more eſcape, by fate
Reſerv'd the future patriots of their ſtate.
Leæna, urg'd in vain, ſuppreſt
Th' important ſecret in her breaſt:
Her tender limbs now curſt tormentors tear,
And waſte their barb'rous arts upon the fair;
In ev'ry nerve convulſive horrors reign,
And ſtruggling nature ſinks beneath the pain:
Thrice on her lips the half-form'd accents hung,
As oft' th' undaunted heroine ſtopt her tongue;
But when ſhe found her courage fail,
And all the ſofter ſex prevail,
Begone, ſhe cry'd, falſe, treach'rous part,
Unworthy of my greater heart!
She ſpoke, and tore the traitor from his place.
And ſpit it in the trembling tyrant's face.

XVI.

Taught by the great example, Athens roſe;
Far from the happy land the tyrant flies,
And Perſia's realm a ſafe aſylum choſe;
There the proud monarch, with a tender care,
Receives his fellow raviſher;
Grants him of ſlaves immenſe ſupplies,
To liberty a glorious ſacrifice;

† *Hipparchus.*

That great Miltiades might be divine,
And Marathon in deathleſs honours ſhine.

XVII.

But Xerxes' arms for vengeance, to his cauſe
Millions of ſlaves, a world in fetters draws:
Swell'd into madneſs, as the tyrant view'd
The vaſt, unnumber'd multitude;
Sure ruin his preſumptuous thoughts decree
To Greece, and ev'ry land that dar'd be free:
Nor vain his pride were it to numbers giv'n
To change the firm reſolves of Heav'n.
The groaning earth th' unwieldy burden feels,
Exhauſted rivers ſcarce ſupply their meals.
Europe from Aſia to divide, in vain
Rolls its fierce waves the eaſtern main:
The monarch ſpeaks, and ſwift at his command
The lab'ring ſquadrons join the land.
With laſhes and with chains he aw'd,
The courage of the wat'ry god;
The curling billows foam no more,
And tam'd to dull ſubmiſſion kiſs the ſhore:
All nature ſhrinking from his rage,
Scarce dar'd in Freedom's cauſe engage;
Suſpended ev'n the Goddeſs ſeem'd to ſtand,
Doubted of Fate's decree, and trembled for the land.

XVIII.

Three hundred Spartans, (Heav'n requir'd no more,
To ſhake th' intolerable pow'r)
Thy ſtreights, Thermopylæ, ſecure; and there
Suſtain the wildeſt fury of the foe;
Yet think it cowardice no more to dare,
They ſeek the combat, and prevent the blow.
Thus iſſue from the Lybian wood
Fierce lions preſs'd by want of food;
O'er weak incloſures force their way,
Fill all the ſpacious folds with blood,

And make the trembling fugitives their prey:
No more the bleating troop th' invaders fears,
Than Perſia's hoſt their conquerors.
The monarch ſculks behind his fartheſt bands,
Deſtin'd to periſh by leſs noble hands.
His coward vaſſals threaten from afar,
And diſtant, dart a miſſive war;
The chiefs urge on the rage, they wound,
And deal inevitable death around;
Then with their glorious toils oppreſt,
And tir'd with conqu'ring, ſink to reſt.

XIX.

Pleas'd, in th' Elyſian ſhades they hear
The honours by their country won,
The num'rous glories of a war
Ended by wonders, as begun.
Deſcending heroes, proud in conqueſt, tell
What numbers at Platæa fell;
At Mycale, what heaps of ſlain,
And Salamis, diſcolour'd all the main.
The curſed inſtruments of public woe
Crowd all the wide infernal plains;
There juſtly ſentenc'd, undergo
Infinite tortures, and eternal chains,
But the dire * monſter, whoſe unbounded rage
A gen'ral ruin only could aſſuage,
Fills all the griſly ruler's mind,
And ev'ry thought's employ'd, to find
Some equal puniſhment, ſome full reward,
For all he acted, and for all he dar'd.
All hell is buſy to prepare his doom,
Stern juſtice waits impatient 'till he come;
For him Omnipotence exhauſts his ſtore
Of vengeance yet improv'd, and plagues unfelt before
For him with double rage the fiery torrents roar.

* *Xerxes.*

The gloomy ſhade deſcends; a wretched ſlave,
Mean as himſelf, and in this only brave,
Sent him, unpity'd, to a ſordid grave.

XX.

The deathleſs trophy of the Perſic wars
Inteſtine broils (a dreadful ſcene!) ſucceed,
Inglorious triumphs, and diſhoneſt ſcars;
While Grecia's braveſt ſons conſpire to make their parent bleed.
Had but their matchleſs virtue been employ'd
In the ſoft arts of gentle Peace,
Or ſav'd the free, and ſlaves alone deſtroy'd;
Ulyſſes' fame ſhould yield to Pericles,
And the great youth ‖ whom Socrates inſpir'd,
Beyond the ſon † of Thetis be admir'd.
In how bright luſtre had the Theban ‡ ſhone,
Had only barb'rous hoſts his valour known!
Nor Sparta can of her Lyſander boaſt,
Since all the hero in the tyrant's loſt.
Forbear, illuſtrious ſouls, forbear
To tempt the angry ſkies;
The Pow'rs ſo much incens'd, prepare
Your madneſs to chaſtiſe:
An unknown, deſpicable hand
Shall join you in one common woe;
At Cheronæa ſtrike a fatal blow,
And drive th' unwilling Goddeſs from the land.

XXI.

To Rome the Charmer wing'd her flight
Rome her darling and delight;
There Brutus fix'd the heav'nly Fair's abode,
Brutus, illuſtrious demigod!
Fain would the muſe his glorious acts purſue,
And bring the wonders of his life to view,
Shining and great in ev'ry part;
Ev'n then, when he beheld his Rome oppreſs'd,

‖ *Alcibiades.* † *Achilles.* ‡ *Epaminondas.*

Hid the wild tumults of his throbbing heart,
And in tame folly well the ſlave confeſs'd.
The Sov'reign thus whom heav'n and earth adore,
With well diſſembled patience bears
Some vile inſulter of his pow'r,
Deaf to his wrongs, and to the injur'd's pray'rs;
'Till by repeated crimes the wretch ſecure,
Blaſphemes the eaſy God that can ſo long endure;
Then pointed lightnings pierce the ſkies,
And with amazing force the tardy vengeance flies.

XXII.

Ev'n now, methinks, I ſee the hero ſtand,
Graſping Lucretia's dagger in his hand;
He ſummons to his aid deliv'ring Jove,
And all the tyrant-hating hoſts above;
Then from below the matron calls, to view
The great revenge to her wrong'd honour due.
The aſtoniſh d crowd believe the chief inſpir'd,
And, in a moment, to like raptures fir'd,
Feel a loſt vigour to their breaſts reſtor'd,
Shake off their fetters, and abjure their lord;
The bleeding dame almoſt remain'd unmourn'd,
While peace, and liberty, and blooming joys return'd.

XXIII.

Too mighty were thoſe joys, too vaſt,
Unmix'd with leſſer ſorrows long to laſt;
A few raſh youths, a thoughtleſs band,
Attempt the exil'd monarch to reſtore,
To fix on former props the ſhaken power,
And load with heavier chains the reſcu'd land.
What various horrors, Conſul, rack'd thy mind,
Thy ſons the firſt in the black liſt to find!
Not long the father with the patriot ſtrove,
Soon prevail'd his country's love!
The awful judge to the tribunal comes,
And to the axe his guilty offspring dooms;

And views, unmov'd, in each expiring ſon
Rome's fears deſtroy'd, and his own hopes undone.
The anguiſh of his ſoul and woe,
He well avenges on th' invading foe;
Then dies: but ſtruck for freedom as he fell,
And ſent a riſing tyrant ‖ down to hell.
Hail, great deliv'rer of a race oppreſt!
Hail, name, to future ages bleſt!
Thee ſhall pure matrons ſing, ſoft virgins thee,
Avenger ſure of injur'd chaſtity!
Tyrants unborn ſhall tremble at thy name,
And heroes yet to come be kindled by thy flame.

XXIV.

But what avail the wonders done,
Tyrants expell'd, and conqueſts won?
Within Rome's bowels a domeſtic foe
Erects a fortreſs to enſlave the land;
Its lofty heights the town command,
And threatens ruin all below.
In words like theſe the frighted crowd
Utter their complaints aloud.
Raſh complaints! ill grounded fears!
The great Valerius, ſee, appears!
Submiſſive, ſee! he bows around,
And bends his humble faſces to the ground.
To you, he cries, from whom all ſway deſcends,
Romans, to you your ſubject conſul bends:
Juſtly you ſhrink at arbitrary ſtate,
But hard to judge your magiſtrate!
I e'er a Pow'r above your laws I ſought,
Or e'er your freedom injur'd but in thought;
Turn, turn on this devoted head
The dreadful axes that you gave;
Or ſpeedier lightning flaſh me dead,
And op'ning earth become my grave!

‖ *Aruns.*

Soon ſhall this houſe be raz'd; and, ſunk to duſt,
Clear my ſuſpected faith, and prove your fears unjuſt.
Already levell'd as he ſpoke,
The building ſinks amain;
Down the wide hill the ruins ſmoke,
And fill the extended plain.
Sublime in impious ſtate, Verſalia, riſe,
Fit for the wrath and juſtice of the ſkies;
This houſe deſtroy'd eternal praiſe ſhall claim,
When with thy pile is loſt the hated founder's ‖ name.

XXV.

Not Gods by all the ſpacious earth ador'd,
With half ſuch joy a thouſand kings behold,
Each of unnumber'd ſlaves the lord,
Decking their ſhrines with tributary gold,
As fill'd the Goddeſs, when ſhe ſaw
Rome's glorious offspring own her law.
Whom ſhall I firſt rehearſe? the deathleſs throng
Confounds the muſe, and tires the lab'ring ſong.
Who can enough the Gracchi praiſe,
Or ſtern Torquatus to due honours raiſe?
What colours paint Servilius, as he ſtood
Warm with great rage, and more than half a God,
His arm freſh reeking with a tyrant's ¶ blood?
Who, thro' a train of heroes, trace
Th' unfading glories of the Fabian race?
In equal numbers, who extol
Camillus, terror of the impious Gaul;
And Manlius thund'ring from the capitol?

XXVI.

Bleſt Italy! where ev'ry plain and ſtream
Immortal actions crown;
The free-born muſe's grateful theme,
And ſacred to renown.

‖ *Louis XIV.* ¶ *Sp. Malius.*

Horatius here, alone, an army ſtood,
Guardian of Rome amidſt ſurrounding foes:
Sav'd Tyber, bear his praiſes on thy flood,
And bid old Ocean ſpread them as he flows!
There Coſſus from a ſcepter'd tyrant tore
His life, and all the gorgeous arms he wore;
The ſpoils adorn Feretrian Jove's abode,
A preſent worthy of the thund'ring god!
Marcellus here firſt taught deſpairing Rome,
That Hannibal could be o'ercome.

XXVII.

When Curius and Fabricius I behold,
Auguſt in willing poverty, deſpiſe
Barbaric gems, and heaps of profer'd gold,
And a mean freedom, conſtant, prize;
My breaſt a generous emulation fires,
And all my ſoul to deathleſs fame aſpires.
All hail! ye venerable ſeats,
Of godlike minds the bleſt retreats,
Low cottages, obſcure abodes,
That bred a race of demi-gods:
Where you, great ſhades, where Scaurus liv'd, and thou §
Twice dictator from the plough.
Ye powers, how very poor to theſe,
Appear the loftieſt palaces!
I ſcorn the little, deſpicable things,
And pity the vain pride of all their builder-kings.

(Left unfiniſhed.)

§ *L. Q. Cincinnatus.*

END OF VOLUME SECOND.